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JANUARY 12, 1978, ISSUE NO. 2

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The Long Island FISHERMAN

The Difference Between Just Fishing and Catching Fish!

VOL. 13, NO. 2

JANUARY 12, 1978

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MESH**

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Rod building and repair is an excellent winter pastime for the fisherman. See the article "Grips & Butts" on page 31 for further details.

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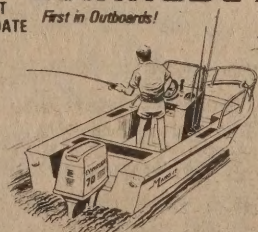
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EDITOR'S HEAD

L.I.F. APPLAUDS DECISION TO STUDY BAITFISH

The Department of Environmental Conservation has recently announced that it will undertake a study of baitfish populations in Long Island waters. We already know that menhaden will be one of the species to be given a careful look-see, but other species such as sand eels, spearing and killies also need to be studied.

At the present time, the Pisani-Mannix Law is the only legislation dealing with menhaden and, as you may know, this law restricts commercial menhaden fishing to the waters outside the buoy line in the western portion of Long Island Sound. The law was passed primarily as a control mechanism for ending social conflict between sport fishermen and commercial bunker boats and was not really intended as a management procedure. You may recall that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, competition for the bunker—especially in the harbors—between these two groups was intense.

However, bunker have been scarce in Long Island Sound for the past few years, and concern over juvenile bunker is high. Although scattered schools of adult bunker have put in an appearance in the harbors from time to time, juveniles are almost nonexistent. Reasons? We don't really know! At the last meeting of the Sportfishing Council, Mr. Anthony Taormina, Director of the DEC Division of Marine and Coastal Resources described the intent of the Department to develop new regulations concerning menhaden. The Council has established a committee, headed by Wade Denning of the Manhasset Bay Sportsman's Club, to work closely with the Department in the formulation of new legislation and/or regulations.

At the present time, menhaden is the only species for which action is already in the formulative stages. Nonetheless, the remainder of the baitfish problems need a thorough study. Don't be misled by the abundance of sand eels in our waters this year and last. If it hadn't been for these wiggling critters, Long Island Sound would have been a desert.

Pods of various baitfish have been commonplace in the bays such as Moriches, Shinnecock, Great South Bay, and Peconic Bay. Unfortunately, we cannot explain why there has been more spearing and other bait in the bays, while it remains scarce in Long Island Sound. Until about 1972, huge amounts of spearing, for example, were prevalent in Long Island Sound and prior to 1971, small bunker had been "old reliables." Who can forget the late summer and fall surface action, that saw blues and bass chasing small bunker up and down the Sound.

We're not denigrating the importance of sand eels as forage for game fish, but we do recognize that one species of baitfish is not sufficient to hold game fish for an entire season and to complete the cycle of life from early spring to late fall. Sand eels, for example, squirrel themselves away in colder deep water during the summer months, leaving the inshore grounds virtually devoid of life. Then, too, some types of baitfish—such as mullet and bunker—migrate into and out of our waters with the seasons.

One of the great concerns to us over the past five years has been the absence of spearing, because these fish are constant residents in our waters. Long after the other species had migrated, the spearing were still plentiful, providing excellent fishing for striped bass well into December. However, with few spearing available, the bass must leave our waters early and follow available bait, either to offshore areas or swim south.

All of the preceding discussions should demonstrate that the baitfish problem is a complex one and that the intricate web of life that binds the predator, baitfish, and the sport fisherman is sophisticated and cannot be understood with ease.

Research on baitfish has been slim over the years and yet it is equally important to understand the life cycles and ecologically pertinent problems relative to baitfish as it is for the predator. Without food, the game fish must feed elsewhere!

Thus, we applaud the plans of the Department of Environmental Conservation to study baitfish populations and the environmental factors that may cause cycles of abundance and decline, as well as the contradiction of abundant multi-species baitfish populations in one area, contrasted to single species' abundance elsewhere.

The Sportfishing Council is pleased to participate in the evaluation of research studies and the planning of legislation and/or regulations that may add to our ability to manage baitfish as efficiently as we soon hope to manage important game fish and food-fish species. We will keep you informed on progress in this area.

William J. Muller



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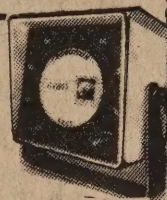
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We have been informed by the people who are trying to put a navigation light on the Golf Ball at Point Lookout, that things are moving right along. All permits have been secured and they are hopeful that the light will be up by April, 1978. However, contributions have only reached half-way to the goal of \$3700. The folks who are working on this project ask all concerned boatmen to send a contribution today to: **Falcon's Light, 3060 Lee Place, Bellmore, N.Y. 11710.**

FLOTILLA 15 BOATING COURSE

An adult course in Boating Skills and Seamanship will be given by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 1-5 starting Jan. 10, 7:30 to 9:30 PM in the Bay Shore Junior High School, Brook Ave., north of Sunrise Highway.

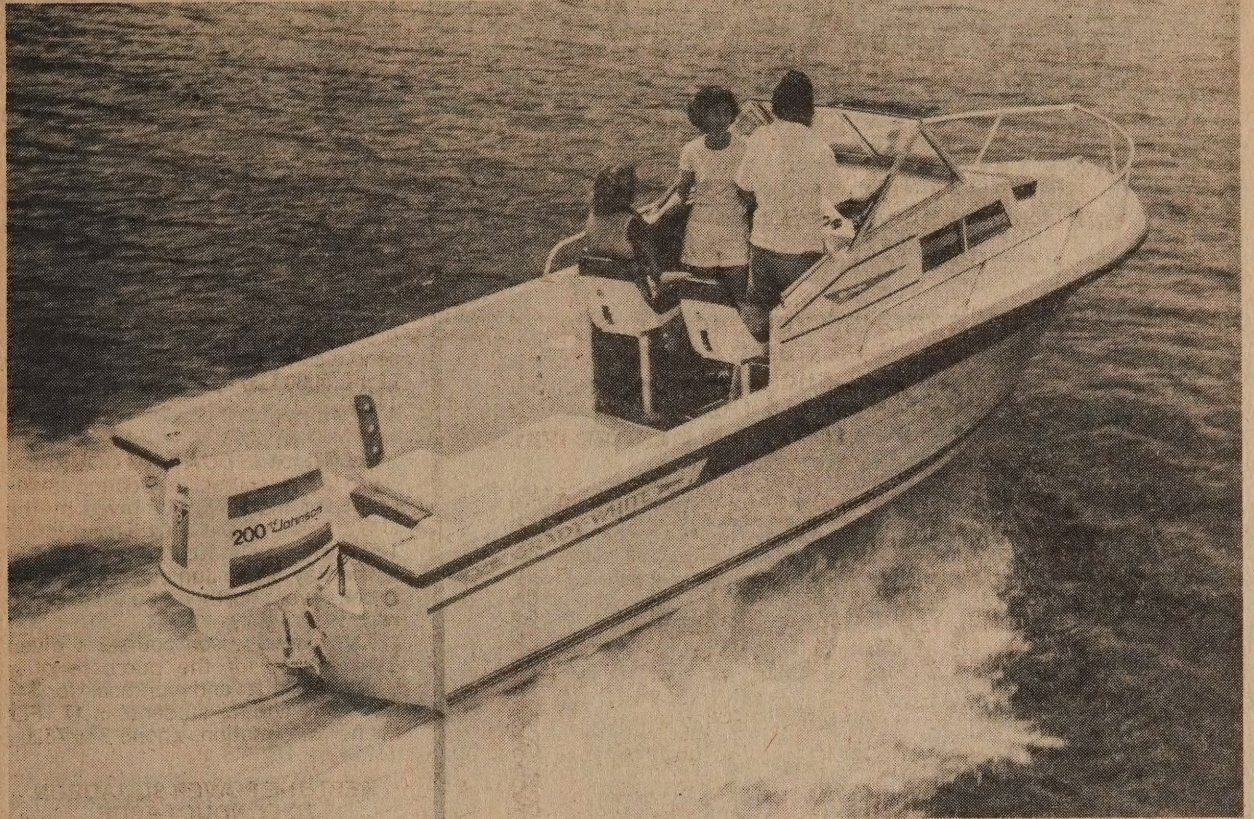
The twelve-lesson course is given free, except for the purchase of a student manual and workbook for \$4. Minimum age for students is 17. For further information, phone 231-7320.

NEPTUNE POWER SQUADRON TO CONDUCT FREE BOATING COURSE

Commander Morgan Thayer, Jr., of Huntington's Neptune Power Squadron, a unit of the United States Power Squadrons, has announced the Spring Boating Course schedule. Registration for the free course is at 8 PM Monday, January 16, at John Glenn High School, Elwood Road, East Northport; and at 8 PM Wednesday, February 1, at Walt Whitman High School, West Hills Road, Huntington Station. Classes begin at 8 PM on January 23, and February 8, at John Glenn and Walt Whitman High Schools, respectively. Late registration will also be accepted on the first night of classes. The same course will be offered at both schools. The Neptune Squadron has offered these ten-week courses to boating enthusiasts for over thirty-five years.



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CHUM LINES

SEA SCALLOPS

Recently I have acquired two large sea scallop shells locally on L.I. I had always thought sea scallops were diced up shark served in restaurants as otherwise. I have clammed and fished in the Long Island area for years, but have never encountered any sea scallops. Maybe you can tell me where they grow, how they're

caught, how they eat, etc.? John Cosgrove, III., Pt. Washington, NY. There are indeed such things as sea scallops. Bay scallops are dark with prominent ridges in the shell. The shape of the shell resembles the Shell Gasoline emblem. Sea scallops have smoother shells and are lighter in color. Unfortunately, sometimes unscrupulous marketers may push chunks of skate as scallops. However, it is usually fairly easy to tell the difference. The marketable part of a scallop is the muscle that holds the shells together. Thus, the grain of the tissue runs lengthwise. This is difficult to achieve when skate is stamped out into the shape of a sea scallop.

Scallop muscles also have a very thin sheath that surrounds the muscle fibers and this would be missing in any forgery. Fortunately, such abuses are few and far between and the average consumer need not worry.

READER WANTS BAIT FISH INFORMATION

Your recent article on sand eels was very informative.

I will highly appreciate it if you can publish similar articles about other baits for this area, particularly about squid. **Ken Bose.**

Interesting that you should ask! In designing the Fish Talk column concept, we originally thought only about the species of fish that we usually chase around the sea. However, we received several requests for bait fish reviews and now it seems that there is more interest in bait fish than we realized. About squid, we'll have a Fish Talk on squid in either Issue #4 or #5.

READER SEEKING TO JOIN CLUB

I am a subscriber to The Long Island Fisherman. I would like to see published a list of various clubs along with telephone numbers. I am interested in joining one close to the area I live.

Could you please advise me of one close to Roslyn, Mineola, or New Hyde Park area? **J. Guardino, E. Williston, NY.**

There are several excellent fishing clubs in your back yard. However, it is a little tricky making a recommendation since you do not indicate what type of fishing you prefer. Most clubs have their specialties from offshore to the surf, and if someone joins a club whose special interests are far afield from his own, that fisherman will no doubt feel like a misfit. We suggest that you read the Club News section of this publication over the winter months. Many clubs send us news about significant fish caught and/or contest winners and new officers. We try to print as many of these as we can for our readers' information. Usually, when a club has several openings for new members, they list them with other club news.

Good luck; we hope you find the club that's just right for you!

WIRE LINE KNOTS

After reading many of your articles about small boat fishing for fluke, bass, and blues, I finally opted to purchase a 14' tin boat with a 25 h.p. motor. I would like to use this boat for some trolling, with wire line, but I can't locate a proper knot for joining the wire to the mono at one end, and the leader at the other.

If you have the time, please send me some information as to the knot you use, and way in which you tie it. Thank you for your time and effort. **D. G. Kamienski, Roebiling, NJ.**

The standard knot to attach wire line to a leader or backing of monofila-

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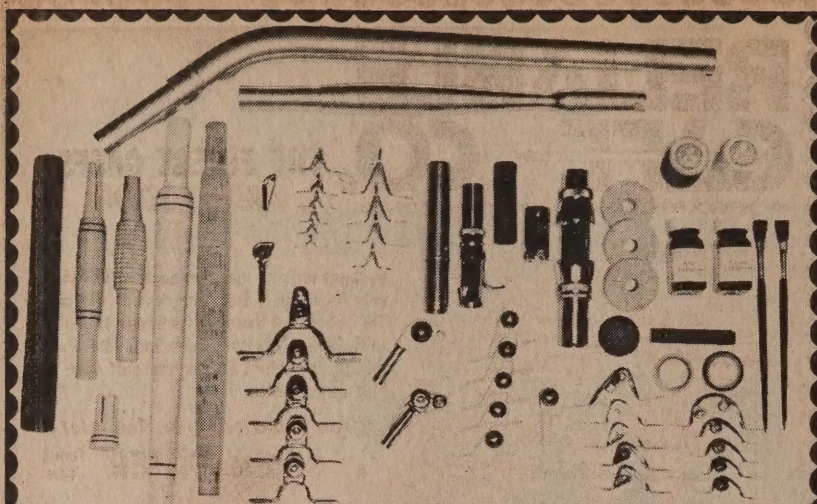
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ment is the Albright Knot. It forms a strong knot that easily slides through rod guides and is clearly shown in the book, **PRACTICAL FISHING KNOTS**, by Lefty Kreh and Mark Sosin.

Another excellent connection utilizes a number 3 barrel swivel between the backing and the wire and the leader and the wire. A haywire twist joins the wire to the swivel and a clinch knot joins the mono to the swivel.

There are pros and cons to each connection. The Albright is difficult to tie, especially on a cold, rough November day, but the knot can be used on rods with roller, Carboloy or ceramic guides. The knots to connect the barrel swivel are far easier to tie, but the swivels cannot fit through roller guides or roller tiptops.

MR. FLOUNDER A MISTAKE

About that talking flounder article: I didn't like it. The piece was cutesy-pie and grade school, especially when compared to the straightforward and informative Fish Talk column done by Doc Muller. To my surprise, it got a favorable response. Your job is to inform, educate and entertain the fishing public. If it takes a babbling bergall to do it, then I'm all for it. **P. J. Perina.**

You can't please all of the people all of the time—but we keep trying. Your feedback helps and not just when the feedback is complimentary. We keep growing because you keep caring. Thanks. **Dr. W.A. Muller**

STREN BOOKLET

I thought you might like to pass this along to your readers. I recently picked up a copy of the enclosed booklet from Stren Line Company, on how to tie fishing knots. It fits easily in a tackle box and is good reference for those hard to remember knots. **John McAllister, Ridgfield Park, N.J.**

Thanks for the tip, John. The booklet covers the thirteen most often tied knots and goes into detail on the UniKnot System. It is available from the DuPont Co., PP & R Dept., Stren Fishing Line, Wilmington, Delaware 19898.

Wilson Chin: Please call The Fisherman office regarding your book order.



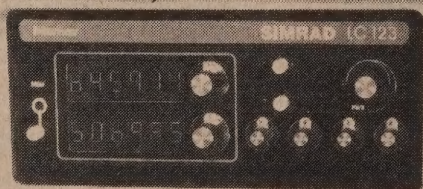
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ANNUAL L.I. FISHING COURSE SET FOR FEBRUARY 2ND

The Fifth Annual Long Island Saltwater Fishing and Boating Safety Course is scheduled to commence on February 2, 1978, at 8:00 p.m. at Hewlett Junior High School No., located on Peninsula Blvd., four blocks west of Mill Road, Hewlett, Long Island.

Registration is Feb. 2, at 7:30 p.m., the first night. Course night dates are Feb. 2, 9 & 16; March 2, 9 & 16. Cost for materials and honorariums is \$10 per student. Further information may be had from Scott Goebel, 516-825-3134.

S.O.S. SEEKS HELP

Save Our Strippers is seeking new members to serve on its Board of Directors and on several committees. Anyone concerned about the striped bass shortage and wanting to become active in conservation work can call Bob Rance (516) 541-8676. No experience is necessary. We will teach you all we know. Retired stripper fishermen and women, available to attend daytime hearings for S.O.S., can be particularly helpful.

SALTWATER FISHING CLINIC GOOD WINTER CATCH

Are you interested in trying your hand at a new aspect of saltwater fishing, but don't know where to get information? Are you looking to expand your present knowledge to increase your catch of those elusive blues, weaks, and striped bass?

This eight-week course, offered by New Jersey Saltwater Fishing Association, provides a unique concept of instruction on saltwater fishing along the coastal waters of New Jersey. The course is designed for the beginner, experienced and adventurers seeking to improve skills and techniques in pursuit of their most desired game fish.

Topics to be discussed include: offshore and inshore fishing; surf and jetty fishing; fishing from small craft and party boats; bay and river fishing; knot tying and terminal tackle; baits, and tackle care and repair.

Each session will be conducted by a different instructor, all of whom are experienced anglers supporting their habit as sportsmen, writers, editors, biologists, licensed skippers and sport shop owners. They include: Milt Rosko, Bill Merrill, Dick Kondak, Charles Grazioso, Frank Rusch, Pete Barrett and John Wilkinson. Instruction will be highlighted by the use of films and slides, in addition to hand-out charts, notes, and printed materials. Door prizes given last session.

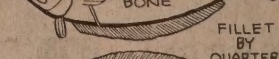
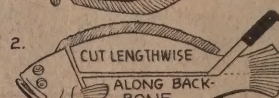
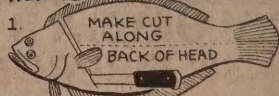
The Clinic will be conducted Wednesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:30, February 15 through April 5. It will be held through the Parsippany Adult School at Parsippany Hills High School—Studio B, 20 Rita Dr., in Parsippany. The fee is \$25. For additional information and registration, call the Adult School at 267-4086.

GOOD NEWS FOR CLEAN WATER

The completion of the Federal grant application process for Fiscal Year 1976 involving water quality improvement projects throughout New York State was announced today by State Senator Bernard C. Smith (R-Northport). Senator Smith said, "I am happy to report that the United States Environmental Protection Agency has approved a sufficient number of project applications made by our State Department of Environmental Conservation which will fulfill its outstanding financial obligation to the State of New York for sewage treatment programs totalling \$1.046 billion.

"During the next year," Senator Smith continued, "our local governments will be able to take advantage of this infusion is Federal funds by letting out bids for about \$1.3 billion worth of construction work on much-needed sewage treatment plants. As Chairman of our Senate Standing Committee on Conservation, Recreation and the Environment, I am committed to implementing a variety of sound and effective environmental management programs throughout our State, but I am particularly pleased when we are able to create tens of thousands of jobs by virtue of these programs. Contrary to what many representatives of the business community have been saying, the approval of these important water quality improvement projects is proof positive that our efforts to protect the environment and preserve our precious natural resources are directly responsible for an improved economy through new employment opportunities."

HOW TO FILLET...



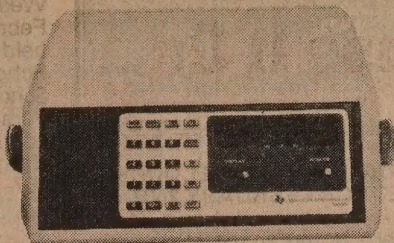
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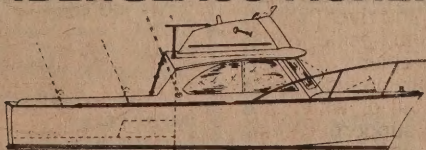
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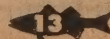
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★ NOVEMBER CONTEST RESULTS ★

FINAL!

★ SURF ★

★ BOAT ★

FINAL!

CLUB NAME	BASS	BLUES	WEAKS	BASS	BLUES	WEAKS	Nov. Pts.	Total Pts.
★ MASSACHUSETTS ★								
CAPE COD SALTIES				273	27		300	7436
PIONEER VALLEY SURF CLUB								2511
LINESIDER BASS CLUB				191	135	11	337	1826
★ RHODE ISLAND ★								
WOONSOCKET BASS CLUB	264	94		260	150		768	9182
THE JONAH'S							419	6217
OCEAN STATE STRIPER CLUB	419							4368
S. COUNTY ROD & GUN CLUB								3450
NARRAGANSETT PIER SPORTFISHING				141	176		317	2908
EAST BAY ANGLERS								1826
VFW POST 5392 FISHING CLUB					15		15	1310
RIVERSIDE SPORTFISHING CLUB								1255
BLACKSTONE VALLEY STRIPER CLUB								571
★ CONNECTICUT ★								
CONN. RIVER STRIPED BASS CLUB		30		417	146		593	5291
HARTFORD SURF FISHING CLUB	32				157		189	3994
WESTPORT STRIPED BASS CLUB								2630
MILFORD STRIPED BASS CLUB								1540
DUNHAM SALTIES								225
STRATFORD BOAT OWNERS								42
★ NEW YORK ★								
LONG BEACH STRIPED BASS CLUB				354	141		495	8130
STRIPER SURF CLUB	608	182			111		901	7141
LONG ISLAND STRIPER CLUB	600	206					906	6538
EMPIRE STRIPER ASSOC.				258	169		417	5806
KINGS BAY STRIPER CLUB				214	149		363	4867
HUNTINGTON ANGLERS				410	154	16	848	4093
NO. SHORE ANGLERS		268		17	58	31	738	3981
FARRAGUT STRIPER CLUB	312	320		44	146		278	2890
PATCHOGUE FISHING CLUB	88			24	140		206	2722
GREAT SOUTH BAY ANGLERS	42						90	2646
STATEN ISLAND SURF CLUB	90						158	2531
SKUNKED AGAIN FISHING ASSOC.					156			2345
BEACH COMBER SURF AND FUN CLUB								1903
SOUND & SURF ANGLERS		292	26	55	155	17	545	1877
CAUSEWAY FISHING CLUB				236	153		389	1812
BAY END STRIPER CLUB					165		165	1778
EASTERN ANGLERS				15	104		119	1566
MANHASSETT BAY SPORTSMENS CLUB				45	124		424	1532
N. BROOKHAVEN SPORTFISHING CLUB		255						1510
SURFERS OF LONG ISLAND								1480
HAMPTON'S SURF CLUB					136		136	1159
MILL RIVER ROD & GUN CLUB								774
BABYLON TUNA CLUB								752
FISHING BUGS OF BROOKLYN								733
NEW ANGLERS								855
BAYVIEW ROD & GUN CLUB					137		137	616
SURF & SEA ANGLERS					110		110	403
HUNGERLIEDER FISHING CLUB								298
CENTER ANGLERS								90
OTHER PLACE ANGLERS								21
FREEMPORT TUNA CLUB								14
FISHING POST								
★ PENNSYLVANIA ★								
DELAWARE VALLEY ANGLERS								301
N. PHILA. SURF FISHING CLUB		52					52	74
★ NEW JERSEY ★								
ASBURY PARK FISHING CLUB	96	76	20		57		249	5574
BERKELEY STRIPER CLUB				21	122	55	198	3030
LONG BRANCH FISHING CLUB				24	133		157	1744
HUDSON RIVER FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION				17			17	1367
BRUNSWICK SURF CLUB								703
NOR'EAST STRIPER CLUB								258
L.B.I. SURF ANGLERS ASSN.								202
COLUMBIA								105
HOBOKEN ROD & GUN CLUB								95

CLUB NAME

STATE

TOTAL PTS.

1. WOONSOCKET BASS CLUB	RHODE ISLAND	9182
2. LONG BEACH STRIPED BASS CLUB	NEW YORK	8130
3. CAPE COD SALTIES	MASSACHUSETTS	7436
4. STRIPER SURF CLUB	NEW YORK	7141
5. LONG ISLAND STRIPER CLUB	NEW YORK	6538
6. THE JONAH'S	RHODE ISLAND	6217
7. EMPIRE STRIPER ASSOC.	NEW YORK	5806
8. ASBURY PARK FISHING CLUB	NEW JERSEY	5574
9. CONN. RIVER STRIPED BASS CLUB	CONNECTICUT	5291
10. KINGS BAY STRIPER CLUB	NEW YORK	5177

**The
Top
Ten**



NATIONAL SCENE

NEWS & NOTES
ON THE WORLD
OF FISHING
with Al Ristori

Mackerel & Squid FMPs Advance to Final Stages

With the early December public meetings out of the way, the fishery management plans for mackerel and squid are being finalized and will soon be sent to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval. Sad to say, the turnouts at Riverhead, L.I., and Cape May, N.J., were extremely disappointing. It seems that unless there is something very negative about a plan, the public just doesn't take enough interest to show up and express opinions—as well as gaining information. Bad weather probably hurt the Riverhead meeting, but three people would be a pretty miserable attendance even in a blizzard, considering the importance of mackerel to Long Island fishermen.

Fortunately, the Red Bank meeting resulted in a full house and lots of lively discussion. A substantial portion of the audience was composed of party and charter boat skippers from ports on the Jersey Coast and Sheepshead Bay. The captains were afraid of the quotas proposed for mackerel and the licensing and reporting provisions of the FMP. Though the quota looks restrictive on paper, it really represents the Mid-Atlantic Council's estimate of what might be taken by sportsmen up and down the coast during 1978. Crude estimates at present indicate that under the recent circumstances of low standing stock and heavy foreign fishing during the winter months, the recreational catch has only been about 5,000 metric tons per year. In order not to deplete the spawning stock any further, the Council had to hold the American catch to 14,000 metric tons for 1978. We won't be able to track the sport catch very well in the first year and, in any case, the figures from the spring season won't even be in until the mackerel have left for New England. Considering the circumstances, we'd be delighted if the recreational catch went to the 7000 metric ton level allocated in the plan. The elimination of the foreign fishery should leave the wintering schools pretty much intact and could result in slightly better fishing this spring. However, this is still somewhat of a long shot, and the likelihood of a bonanza is almost nil.

The captains, being eternal optimists, seem to think they're going to fish through 7000 metric tons of mackerel in a few days next spring, and it took awhile to assure them that they wouldn't be put out of business during the middle of the season. Nevertheless, their concern was understandable and we appreciated the opportunity to get their attitudes

on paper as part of the public record. Without such a show of public concern, we might end up with a really restrictive quota in the future. The only portion of this plan affecting the individual angler is the ten-inch length limit. This is hardly a concern to the party boat fishermen, as mackerel that size are rarely encountered offshore and any skipper that sat on a school of such tiny fish (instead of looking for respectable mackerel) would shortly be out of business.

The captains' concern about licenses and reporting also came up at an earlier meeting in New York arranged by Schaefer Contest Director, Bob Blanks. Such requirements are already law for vessels carrying passengers for hire in the fishery for cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder. These species are covered in a plan drawn up by the New England Council. As a matter of law, we can only require licenses and reports on a fishery-by-fishery basis as each plan is approved. The actual intention is to have a single license and log book for every party, charter, and commercial vessel. The license is free and there is no hardship involved in filling out a simple log which is strictly confidential. One captain objected that it was too much trouble to count the fish caught on his boat. I countered by noting that fishing columns are full of big catch reports. If the boats can count their fish on a good day, it's even easier to count them on a bad day! Hopefully, the regulations will be amended so as to make the license and log book requirement as simple as possible.

The important point here is that we need the information badly. Without accurate information about catches and economic value, recreational fishing is likely to take a back seat when quotas are allocated in depleted fisheries. Party boats will be the first to suffer under such circumstances and should have the greatest self-interest in providing accurate data.

Initially, at the Red Bank meeting, there seemed to be a feeling that the Council was a bunch of Government bureaucrats trying to destroy their operations and saddle them with needless regulations. Fortunately, by the end of the session I believe we got across the point that the Council is composed of people interested in the fisheries and the welfare of those making a living from them. Our duty is to do everything possible to bring back depleted fisheries, using the best scientific information, while taking into account the real life problems that fishermen have in making a living in both good years

and bad. That's why we opted for a mackerel quota that will do nothing more than maintain the spawning stock in its present poor state. We were able to shut off the foreign fishery in this fashion and yet still permit American fishermen—both sport and commercial—to take far more mackerel in 1978 than they've caught during the past several years. In order to really improve the mackerel stocks, we would have had to virtually shut off all fishing for that species—an option rejected due to the economic hardships that would have resulted.

One fisherman wanted to know when mackerel stocks would improve. Unfortunately, that's one question no one can answer. All we can do is use the assessment reports from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and do our best to protect the spawning stock. There is no proven relationship between the size of a spawning stock and the success of spawning. However, it is likely that there is some point at which the spawning stock will become so low that there is little likelihood of successful reproduction in the incredibly competitive environment of the oceans. Some species make remarkable comebacks, but the previously super-abundant Pacific sardine has virtually disappeared from the California coast for over two decades now and appears to have lost its niche in the marine environment. The Councils can no more guarantee their management plans will succeed in restoring species to their former abundance than Jimmy the Greek can guarantee his point spreads. What we can do is protect the remaining spawning stocks and thereby "give nature a hand." This isn't being done for any other reason than the benefit of the harvesters—both sport and commercial. In order to succeed we'll need the support and cooperation of those who will reap the benefits!

Commercial Cod Season Closed at End of December

Due to a tremendous improvement in fishing for cod and haddock in the Gulf of Maine last spring, American landings quickly exceeded the quotas established in the New England Councils' FMP. Since then, commercial vessels were restricted to by-catch only on cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder. In order to avoid economic hardship, these regulations were slightly liberalized this fall. However, the emergency regulations providing for the by-catch ran out on December 23. Since the seasonal quotas were already exceeded, all catching of these species was pro-

hibited through December 31. This closure **did not** apply to sport fishing.

The lack of foreign pressure on the offshore grounds probably accounted for some of the improvement in codfishing to the north. Though the mid-Atlantic area didn't share in this bonanza, prospects for the future are bright if the 1975 year class isn't over-exploited. That's the reason for the sixteen inch length limit and strict limitations on our own commercial fishermen. The maintenance of such a "face the music" groundfish plan is essential if the stocks are to be returned to their former abundance. While it takes longer, management can do more with long-lived stocks and, in this case, we've got an excellent opportunity since nature has provided us with the good year classes that are the key ingredient. Though little is known about cod migrations, we appear to get the overflow of the southern New England-Georges Bank stock. Unless that stock is abundant, it's unlikely that there will be any pressure on it to migrate south and west during the fall; therefore, these regulations are in our interest and deserve all the support we can give them.

Support Needed for Delaware Scenic River Bill

While the Tock's Island Dam project has been set aside, the possibility that it will rise again remains. Those interested in preserving the Delaware as a free-flowing river are supporting HR 6403, a Bill submitted by Rep. Peter Kostmayer (D-Pa.), which would designate 114 miles of the Delaware as scenic and recreational in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This would preclude both the dam and any other massive alterations of the river. Shad fishermen should be particularly interested in this legislation, as the dam would probably mean an end to that fishery. New York Governor Carey supports the concept of this bill, while Pennsylvania Governor Shapp has been pushing for the dam. New Jersey Governor Byrne has been against the dam, but his support is needed for the scenic river legislation. Write to Governor Brendan Byrne, The State Capitol, Trenton, New Jersey 08625. Also, ask your Congressman to become a co-sponsor of this legislation.



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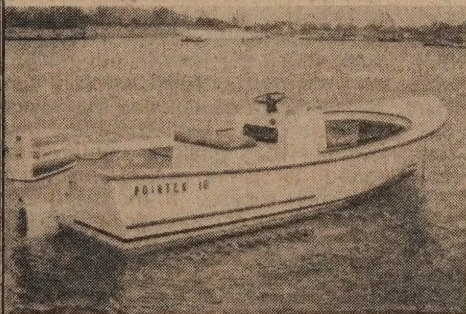
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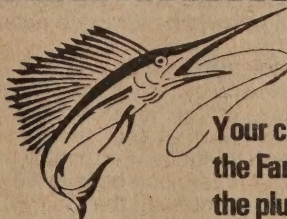
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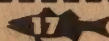
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FISH TALK

with Dr. William A. Muller

Where Are They Now?

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Gee whiz, that's a hard question to answer, even in prime season when you're out on, or in the water where the fish are supposed to be leaping onto your hook! But in January? I wonder if some of our favorite finny species miss us as much as we miss them this time of the year? Here we are oiling the reels and playing new line onto the spool instead of fish. Where do all those fish go in winter?

UNDERSTANDING CHANGE! If we were to have asked this question ten years ago, we probably would have come up with one simple answer—SOUTH! It was very fashionable to believe that all of our local species undertook a mass migration to southern climes. Well, of course this is still true for some fish. Striped bass migrate south—at least the Chesapeake stock does. Clearly too, the billfishes and sharks are joyfully chasing some helpless bait fish where palm trees grow and flying fish fill the night air.

BUT WHAT OF THE OTHERS? We have mentioned several times in this column that our understanding of recent fisheries information suggests that a number of species are inshore-offshore migrants rather than north-south travellers. Disagreement with the thesis that weakfish, sea bass, porgies, and fluke winter on the Continental Shelf has only been proposed for one species—the weakfish! Some fisheries biologists still maintain that the bulk of the weakfish migrate north-south, especially during the first few winters of their life. This may very well be the case, but

there exists considerable evidence that bigger weakfish winter on the shelf. We believe that when draggers ship thousands of pounds of weakfish taken in thirty to fifty fathoms of water that this represents more than a fluke—no pun intended! Wintertime catches have ranged as far north as the waters off Rhode Island. Opponents of this theory argue that southern commercial catches reflect large numbers of the tiderunners during winter.

HOW ABOUT A COASTAL PHENOMENA? Maybe we're all not seeing the forest for the trees. Weakfish apparently spawn in shallow estuaries throughout their range. This fact is becoming more widely accepted all the time. We have to recognize the extent of the fish's spawning when young of the year are encountered almost everywhere that we haul a net. So, perhaps the adult fish prefer to migrate offshore in the winter, beginning at the point of origin—whether it be the bays of Rhode Island or North Carolina—and seek comfortable temperatures off the beach. In the southern part of the species' range, the fish may spend at least part of the winter inshore because water temperatures may be warm enough to allow it. On the other hand, inshore water temperatures off northeastern states may be just too cold.

FLUKE! Little argument here. Fisheries biologists have known for some time that fluke not only winter in about fifty to fifty-five fathoms but that they spawn out there too. The young fish or larval stages, drift

inshore and this accounts for the large numbers of tiny fluke in shallow bays during summer. The parents of these critters are much more deliberate in their migrations and swarm inshore during late spring.

SEA BASS! AND PORGIES! They are out there, too. Both spawn inshore, however. One of the concerns that we had at The Fisherman when the Preliminary Fisheries Management Plans were announced was that proposed windows would allow foreign nationals to fish in an area that was formerly agreed upon as a taboo area in the 1960s. True, there would be no directed fishing for these species, but we were fearful that significant numbers of the fish would be harvested by foreign nationals as by-catch in their search for hake and squid.

LOOKING GOOD! Recently, the window in which foreign nationals can seek squid has been changed. These changes will allow foreign fishermen to seek squid in 100 to 200 fathoms at the edge of the Continental Shelf. Since the Russians and officials of other nations have suggested that their take of squid is both better and "cleaner" in deeper water, perhaps they will prefer to avoid the inshore waters where winter by-catch may be significant and fish further offshore. The term "cleaner" refers to the percentage of the catch that is not the target species. Anyway, it would seem that fluke, weakfish, seabass, and porgies will be less vulnerable to harvesting by foreign nationals. Even though this is a back door approach, the net effect should be very



beneficial.

REQUEST FOR BY-CATCH DATA! I have made a request for this winter's by-catch statistics. These numbers should be available through the National Marine Fisheries Service within a few months. We have noted a decline in the quality of weakfishing in places like the Great South Bay and Peconic Bay, although weakfishing in Long Island Sound has been sensational the last two years. Furthermore, fluking was down, and except for a late season surge in the sea bass fishing, that resource was disappointing for inshore fishermen, too. By-catch statistics should be interesting. I suspect that they will show that large numbers of these four species have been netted during December, January, and part of February.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Why, they are on the Continental Shelf discussing ways of fooling fishermen, of course. They have posted color photographs of plastic shrimp, diamond jigs, bottom bait rigs, and chum pots. All of these are to serve as warnings of the activities of sport fishermen. Watch out—they are liable to develop lockjaw!

WHAT ABOUT THE LITTLE ONES? Don't know. It is difficult to accept the idea that three, four, five, and six inch fish will migrate five hundred miles across open bottom. That would amount to a suicide mission. In the case of fluke, an offshore migration of the little ones also seems unlikely. But who knows! That's part of the excitement of marine science. There is so much that remains to be observed and discovered and each new piece of information opens new horizons. Maybe we will find that young of the year fish winter-over in our bays and sounds? Wouldn't that be something! Then again, maybe we have underestimated how prolific these species really are. Maybe they do migrate great distances, and perhaps the predators are waiting for them, consuming them by the millions. But perhaps there are so many of them that in the end the species survive?

WHY DO SOUTHERN FISHERMEN TAKE FLUKE ALL WINTER? Don't know, but one can offer many ideas. If you have ever travelled to North Carolina's Outer Banks you know how the fluke swarm against the beaches there in winter. Fluke of three inches swim alongside doormats of fifteen pounds. Locals snag the fish with multi-hook contraptions that are dragged through the sand. They keep fluke of all sizes because there are no size restrictions in that state. However, to save our hypothesis is the fact that by late winter, usually after early January, fluke leave North Carolina's inshore waters. Thus, it is not unreasonable to assume that they are migrating offshore in order to complete the spawning portion of their life cycle. Once again, water temperatures become the limiting factor. Warm water inshore along southern

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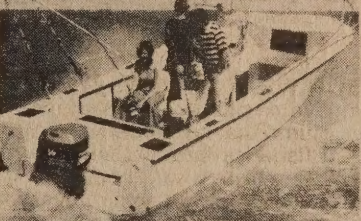
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states for much of the early winter allows the fish to feed right against the beach. Of course, this is not possible in the waters of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and southern Massachusetts. We believe that the bulk of the spawning occurs in February off northeastern states, and perhaps earlier down south. Thus, the disappearance of fluke from inshore waters in the south during late January can be interpreted as an offshore move where spawning will occur.

VARIATION! Yes indeed, don't forget that fish vary from individual to individual. Thus, a ripe female fluke may show up in Chesapeake Bay in late fall; sea bass may be taken in winter on relatively close wrecks from time to time, and porgies may winter over in Long Island Sound for all we know, but that doesn't change the validity of the basic thesis. When we ask—WHERE ARE THEY NOW?—and if we are talking about weakfish, fluke, porgies, and sea bass, the answer has to be—look to the east young man, look to the east!



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How does a guy fail as a fisherman? It isn't difficult. In fact, it's pretty easy. And that's the trouble, for to the uninitiated it seems so easy to be successful at the fishing game. And it is—but only after all the many problems have been overcome. But to be unsuccessful—and remain unsuccessful—is no problem at all.

Why am I so positive? Well look around you. For every successful angler, there are a dozen failures. Therefore, if the percentage is that high, it stands to reason that it must be easy to fail.

If you wish to join that undesired and overpopulated category, there are tried and proven methods to go about it.

For instance, just take for granted you can catch fish without effort on your part. That always works. Also, just believe those desired fish will fill your bucket as easily as they do for those "lucky" fishermen who share your fishing spot. This works, too.

And we've all seen those "lucky" fishermen in action. These are the guys who enter upon the angling scene, stand near discouraged fishermen, and without strain or pain, immediately begin to catch fish. Sure, it looks easy—and therein lies the baited trap. But don't be misled by that ease of accomplishment. It takes a lot of know-how to achieve the title of master fisherman.

If you wish to fail as a fisherman, do it this way: give no thought to your quarry. Just assume it has no intelligence. Believe that it will eagerly seek you out at the instant your bait reaches bottom. That's sure to work.

Give no thought to your bait. After all, fish are stupid. Because you believe God's sea creatures are brainless, why be fussy about bait—it's food, isn't it?

Give no thought to where you fish. Water is water—right?

Give no thought as to season. Because flounder were caught in the general area last April, why shouldn't you get a few in July?

Give no thought to your terminal tackle. What does it matter if your sinker is too light to hold bottom; fish are always hungry—therefore, they'll happily chase after your bait.

Give no thought to hook size. A hook is a hook is a hook. Period. So what's all the flack about using the correct hook?

Far-fetched? Hardly.

Those examples cover exactly the way three fishermen went about their fishing one day last summer in Shinnecock Bay. Their reasons for doing so were exactly as stated. Hard to believe? Yes, it is. But it's true.

The day Nick Hauck and I met those hapless fishermen, we certainly found it hard to believe. We both had been fluke fishing in East Channel near the inlet. Our catch was only so-so and when mid-afternoon approached, we decided to call it quits. Just opposite the commercial trawler fleet, we were flagged down by three fishermen in a rental skiff who were suffering motor trouble. Naturally, we gave them a tow to their fishing station.

We learned they hadn't caught a fish, although they'd been trying since sun-up. That was nothing to be ashamed of: Nick and I had barely made it ourselves. But after we looked over their gear, asked some pertinent questions, and heard their ideas on fishing, we weren't a bit surprised at their results. Everything just listed suited them to a "T."

There are many other ways to fail as a fisherman, but those listed will do for starters. If any one item on that list coincides with your thinking on fishing, take a tip from me—you're off to a bad start.

Let's go back a bit and take a hard look at those items. Contrary to popular belief, fish do not lack

intelligence, else they would have perished with the Dodo. There may be no Einsteins among them, but neither are there any village idiots. If you fail to take this into consideration, it will be a long time before fish go into that bucket.

Fish do not eat everything tossed at them. Intelligent thought must be given to the feeding habits of those fish you expect to catch. Most fishermen know this simple truth, but those three fellows in the stalled skiff didn't.

Water may be water, all right, but only certain areas contain fish. This might be likened to an oasis in the Sahara. There's plenty of sand, but not much life.

All fish life is governed by water temperature, therefore, it is the smart sinker bouncer who gives it some thought. Experienced fishermen closely follow the seasons. They don't depend on luck. They know luck alone produces few fish.

Fishermen who fail to make a study of terminal tackle catch few fish. It's as simple as that. Sinkers that move off with the current may be okay within prescribed limits when fluke fishing, but if your aim is to add blackfish to the bucket, you are doomed to failure.

The hook is the most important part of that terminal tackle; so important in fact that sinker bouncers who fail to make a study of this interesting subject will never become expert fishermen.

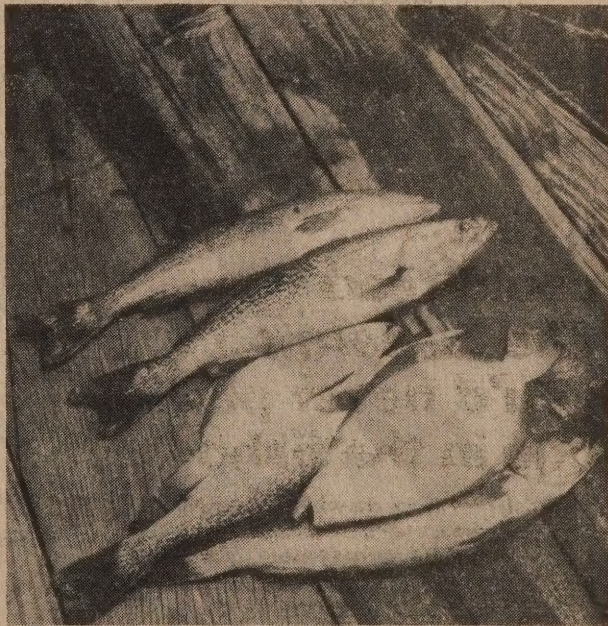
As you can see, the road to failure for a fisherman is wide indeed. It has to be to accommodate all who travel it. Let me say in closing this short article if any of these examples apply to you, I can give you no better advice than to see the error of your ways and quickly set out to rectify them.

Next Week: Some ideas on how master fishermen are made.

Sinker Bouncing

with Matt Ahern

How to Fail as a Fisherman



It takes fishing know-how to land a mixed catch like this.

SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE KLEIN PUSHES SOUND BRIDGE

The concept of a bridge across Long Island Sound has been proposed many times. At this stage of the game, Governor Carey of New York and Governor Ella Grasso of Connecticut are opposed to any bridge. However, County Executive Klein has begun an effort to organize the businessmen of both states to push for the construction of the bridge.

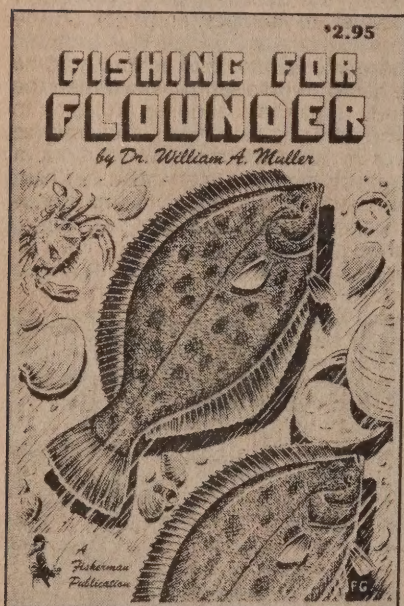
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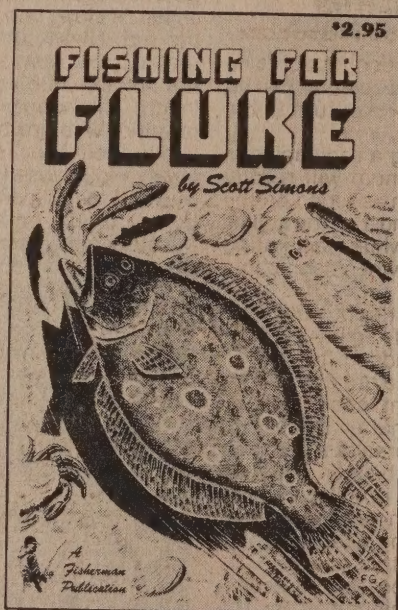
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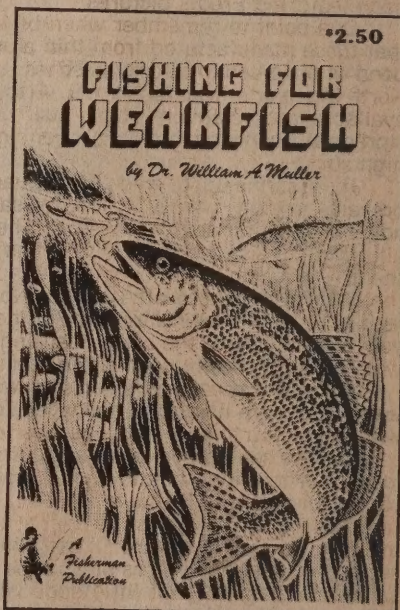


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The aspiring surfman invariably begins his career fishing bottom. For the beginner, the chances of success are greater using this method, with the time spent on the waterfront used to learn the more intricate details of the art of surfcasting. The leisurely pace of bottom fishing provides the angler with the opportunity to watch, and listen to the more knowledgeable fishermen working the beach.

While this spying and eavesdropping are taking place, the angler's rod is usually left unattended at the water's edge. Leaving it propped up with the butt stuck into the sand and a stick jammed under the reel seat is fine if the quarry is flounder or blowfish, but any of the game fish can send you back to the tackle store to seek a new outfit.

The common sand spike, when purchased in your favorite tackle shop, will only cost a few bucks. These are an indispensable part of the bait fisherman's equipment. Most of you probably know all of this already, but I'll try to give a few added thoughts on this subject. Those of you who scorn the use of bait in quest of striped bass can stop reading now and turn to the page featuring Fred's pictures.

One point to remember when buying a sand spike is that those manufactured from thin aluminum will readily bend when forced into rocky beaches such as found on the North Shore or at Montauk Point. Also, most of the spikes available are relatively short which, while facilitating storage and carrying, has a disadvantage when fishing in a hard surf.

If the surf is up, or when great quantities of weeds are present in the wash, a longer sand spike will be advantageous for several reasons. The added height will allow you to raise the angle of your line to a greater height, thereby reducing the amount of line caught in the sweep of the waves breaking on the beach. No matter how much lead is used, the downward force of the breakers will drag your sinker towards the beach, causing a belly in your line which will constantly necessitate reeling in the slack.

On many occasions when the wash is loaded with weed, the extra height gained when using a longer spike will enable you to hold your line clear of this nuisance. Of course, one can always move up to the beach and seek a location where the wash is clear, or possibly wait for the change of tide to flush the area clean. Then again, if your reckoning tells you this is the spot at this tide you'll want to fish right where you are. There will be times when the surf or weed will be impossible to cope with, but the longer spike will give you that little edge which may mean the difference between packing it in or keeping your bait in the water long enough for that "cow" to find.

Another advantage to using a spike which will hold your rod higher off the sand is gained when you have a strong wind blowing loose sand along the beach. Most of the flying sand particles are encountered in the first few feet off the ground. When using a four-foot spike your reel is probably forty-eight inches off the ground, well above the blowing sand which can jam the reel and render it inoperable. Naturally, this distance is determined by how deep it is necessary to embed the spike for a substantial hold and also the length of the butt section of the rod.

Those of you who relish making your own equipment can purchase two, three, or four foot lengths of PCV pipe at a plumbing supply outlet. The reason for the various lengths I have explained, and the choice is yours, but the diameter should be a minimum of two inches to allow ample clearance when snatching your rod after a strike.

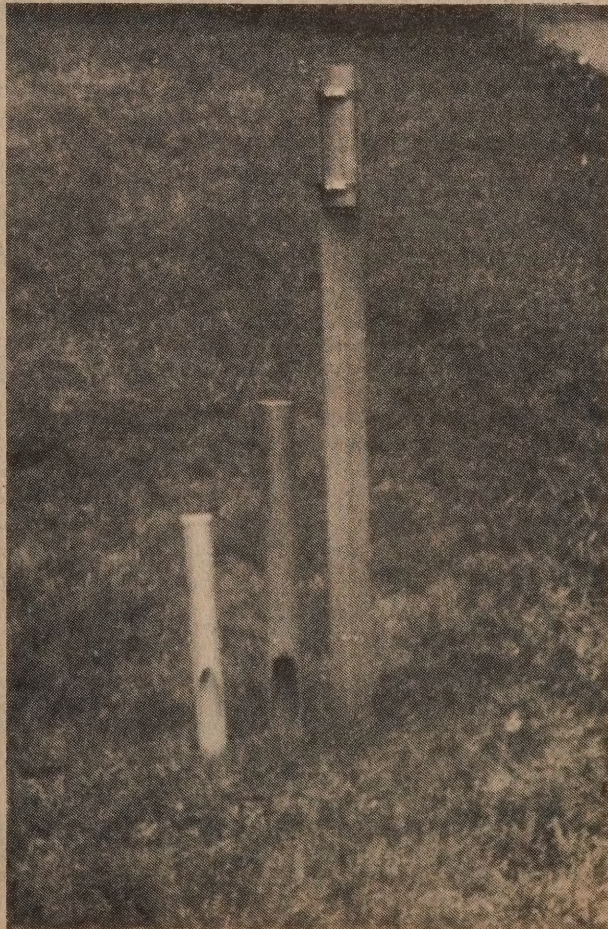
Cut one end of the pipe at a forty-five degree angle to permit easier penetration into the sand. Drill a hole through the center about a foot from the top end so that a

bolt can be inserted and secured in place to act as a stop when the rod is put in place. This stop should be made of brass or some other rust-proof material. Whatever your choice, round off any sharp, protruding edges with a file to prevent snagging your waders.

Another method of making your own sand spike which I have mentioned in previous articles enables you to use any short spikes already in your possession, plus the added benefit of having a long or short spike available as long as a screw driver is handy. Just obtain a four-foot section of angle iron, or better yet, thick gauge aluminum, make two forty-five degree cuts on one end to form a point. Secure the smaller spike to the other end with two stainless steel hose clamps and you are in business.

One disadvantage of the longer sand spike is encountered when equipment must be hand-carried a considerable distance. Any articles that can be attached to your body allows that much more freedom of your hands. Even though the short spikes do not readily fit into your bag, they can easily be adapted to hang from your belt or the shoulder strap of your surf bag. Simply drill a hole in the top of your spike—say one-quarter inch from the lip. Fasten a large snap swivel to your belt and hook on the spike.

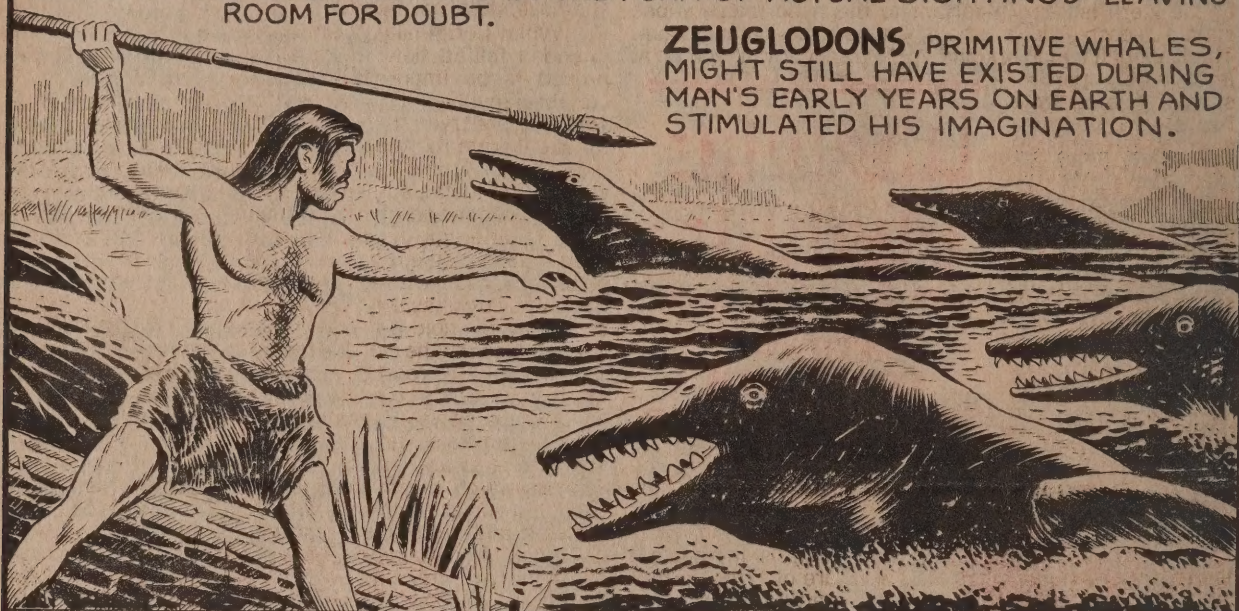
Before I close, there is one condition which must be guarded against while fishing with a sand spike. When the action is slow, one tends to pay less and less attention to the rod. Make sure your drag is loosened sufficiently so that a strike from a heavy fish will not pop the rod out of its holder while you are digging out another beer. Don't laugh! This happened on separate occasions to two friends of mine, who are both knowledgeable bottom fishermen. While their beer is always accessible, the long hours of lonely vigil caused their eyes to close momentarily (or so they tell me). Upon awakening, they discovered their rods gone. Luckily, both were found: one without the fish and the other with a handsome bass in the twenties still on. No names mentioned, but Sal isn't even Irish.



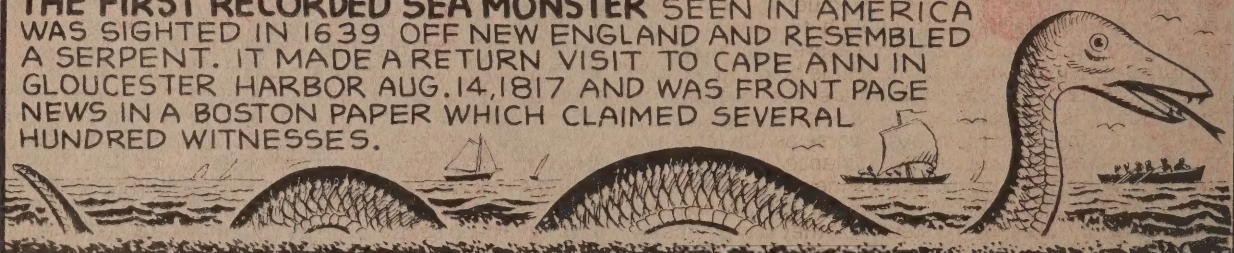
MARINE MONSTERS BY FRED GUARDINEER

FOR CENTURIES THERE HAVE BEEN TALES OF TERRIFYING CREATURES WHO INHABIT THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN. HUGE PREHISTORIC REPTILES, NEVER SEEN BY MAN, WERE KNOWN TO EXIST BECAUSE OF GEOLOGICAL FINDINGS, BUT SEA MONSTER EVIDENCE IS IN THE FORM OF ACTUAL SIGHTINGS - LEAVING ROOM FOR DOUBT.

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It's really amazing...the number of supposed "fishing" boats on the market today that weren't designed for fishing. For example, I've seen small boats supposedly designed for fishing that had the engines placed in the rear of the cockpit which made fishing off the stern virtually impossible without a rod ten feet long. The design also meant that you couldn't gaff a fish from the stern, but would have to walk the fish around to the side of the boat to even see it, much less gaff or net it. The layout of the stern is very important to the fisherman for one simple reason: that's where you will be fishing from. Think about it a moment and you'll discover that you do at least ninety percent of your fishing from the stern, because with the exception of casting, most fishing techniques require it. When you are bottom fishing from an anchored boat you will be fishing from the stern because your line will be running off the back of the boat since that is the direction in which the current is moving.

When trolling, the lines are always trailing behind the boat because of its forward movement. When drifting, the boat has a natural tendency to turn its bow into the direction of the drift, so your line will be either behind or slightly off to one side of the stern.

This fact presents a design problem in fishing boats it seems most manufacturers are not aware of. The stern of the boat is usually cluttered with pretty vinyl-covered seats, engine boxes, tables and supposed "fish boxes" that wouldn't hold an average size bluefish, and "bait wells" that wouldn't be large enough to keep a single bunker alive. And virtually every pleasure boat made has the ultimate design mistake if the boat is going to be used primarily for fishing—the controls are not located in a position which is accessible while fishing. This goes for a small, twenty-footer and gets even worse as the length of the boat increases, where the distance between the controls and the stern increases. The center console style boats alleviate the problem somewhat by placing the console and controls near the stern, but they pay a price by drastically cutting down on the amount of space in the cockpit that can be utilized for fishing. Sure, it's nice to have that big open cockpit with the immense platform for casting in the bow, but what practical purpose is this room when you are doing all your fishing from the last four or five feet of the boat?

Another problem with most boats is that the control and steering wheel are all made with the assumption that you are going somewhere straight ahead. Logical enough assumption, but not entirely correct. As a fisherman, you are often more concerned with where you have just been so that you can return to the same spot. You're constantly turning the boat to work over a small piece of area...and you are trying to fish at the same time you are maneuvering the boat. The normal setup of controls and steering wheel dictates that you stand or sit while facing the bow; but your line is going behind the boat, not in front of it. If you are a contortionist, maybe you can fish with the rod being held behind your back. But even if you were, you'd still be too far away from the stern and your monofilament line will be running over the gunwale, chaffing and fraying. There's only one answer to all these problems: stern controls.

It's interesting to note that most of the outstanding fishermen on Long Island have their vessels rigged up with stern controls, particularly if they are primarily bass fishermen. Famous bass fishermen like Captain Ronnie Lepper of the "Kim"; Captain Frank Braddick of the charterboat "Hurry Up"; and Captain John DeMaio of the charterboat "Vivienne" at Montauk, all have stern controls. Whether trolling or diamond jigging, by having the controls in the stern, the captain can work the lines,

and at the same time, steer the boat. The larger charterboats overcome this problem by having a mate working in the cockpit while the captain steers the boat from the flying bridge. But by having stern controls, the mate is eliminated and the captain can do both. This same situation also exists with the private boatman. If you own a boat, you'll know what I mean. When trolling, you'll find that all you do is run the boat while others fish. And you can forget about ever fishing alone...who's going to steer the boat while you fish?

When I originally decided to write this article, I had intended telling how to install stern controls, but this proved to be impossible, because there are so many variables involved. So the best I can do is to let you know what you are trying to accomplish, and then you will have to take it from there and set up the controls according to the setup of your boat. If you have an inboard boat, you will have to install a tiller bar, which is connected directly to your rudder and gives you manual control over it. The setup is different, depending on the steering system you have—cables, pipe, hydraulic. The best setup for controls on an inboard I have seen are those on John DeMaio's boat Vivienne. John has the tiller bar set up at a specific height so that he can hold it between his legs. This frees both of his hands so that he can use them for fishing. He can steer the boat with his rod pointed away from the stern—all he has to do is turn his head to see what's in front of the boat. On inboard powered boats you will also have to have throttle controls installed in the stern because the standard ones are usually too far away. The single-lever controls which control both shifting and throttle can be used, but you are better off with the dual-lever type where the shift and throttle are controlled separately.

I don't know of any method of installing stern controls on an inboard/outboard, nor do I know of any boats that have, but I'm sure that something could be gimmicked up with a little imagination. Outboard boats are relatively easy, but the setup usually ends up to be a real Rube Goldberg. The lower powered outboards are no problem because they have the controls in a tiller bar type handle, and extension handles are available commercially or can easily be custom made. But the larger horsepower engines lack the handle and create a conversion problem. Depending on the make of engine (Johnson, Evinrude, Mercury, Chrysler) and its horsepower, you will have to design a means of having a fixed bar protruding from the engine. Many of the clam boats seen in the South Shore bays have been set up as such, so it may be a good idea to find one that has the same make and h.p. outboard as yours to see how the captain set it up. You can also ask the marina where you bought your boat for their recommendations. Whatever you do, don't go off half-cocked and start attaching brackets, etc., to the weak Fiberglass cover or trying to weld on the aluminum chassis. Seek out expert advice!



Stern controls allow you to operate the boat and fish at the same time while diamond jigging or trolling. Below the bass that John DeMaio has just gaffed you can see the tiller bar and the shift and throttle controls on the stern.

How-To Make and Use A Line Stripper

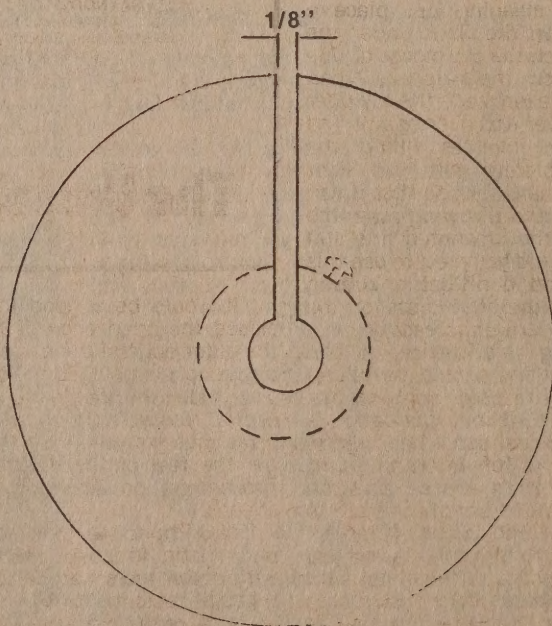
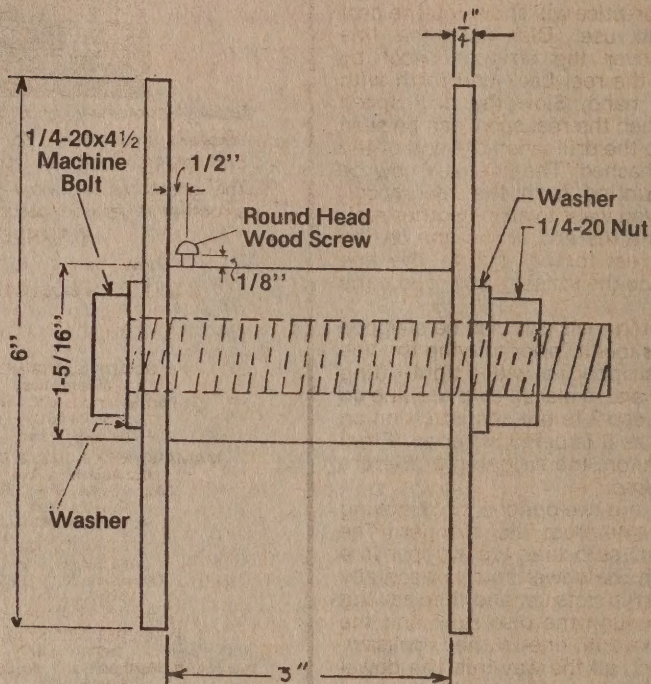
by Andy Stewart

When tackle maintenance time rolls around, one of the most boring and tiring jobs the fisherman encounters is removing old line from his reels so that it may be replaced with new line or line of a different type. I cut down substantially on the time I spend performing this chore by making and using this simple line stripper, which is powered by an electric drill and can be made from scrap material and twenty-seven cents worth of hardware.

To make this line stripper proceed as follows: cut two discs six inches in diameter from one-quarter inch plywood (or any other similar material you have lying around) and drill a one-quarter inch hole through the center of each. Next, cut a one-eighth inch slot in each disc from the outer edge all the way to the one-quarter inch hole in the center. Now cut a piece of 1-5/16" dowel (I used what is commonly known as closet pole for this piece) to a length of three inches. Accurately drill a one-quarter inch hole through the axis of the dowel and then cut a one-eighth inch slot from the outer edge of the dowel to the one-quarter inch hole along the entire length of the dowel. Put some glue (white glue is fine) on the dowel ends, assemble the discs and dowels as shown in the diagram, on a 1/4-20x 4-1/2" machine bolt, align the slots in the discs with the slot in the dowel and tighten the nut. Make sure the slots stay aligned as the nut is tightened and wipe off any excess glue that is squeezed out. Run a small round head wood screw into the dowel about one-half inch in from one of the discs, leaving about one-eighth of the screw shank remaining out of the dowel. The line stripper is ready to use when the glue is dry.

I have found the best tool to use as a power source for this device is a hand-held, variable speed, power drill. A constant speed drill can be used effectively if the trigger is pressed and then quickly released so that the low speeds which are required to start and finish the stripping operation may be attained.

To strip line from a conventional reel first tie a secure end loop in the line end using any of the commonly used end loop knots. Next, tightly chuck up the line stripper in your drill, and hold the drill in your right hand with the small wood screw on top. Place the loop over the head of



END VIEW
(Less Hardware)

the wood screw and hold the reel in your left hand at a distance of about 12 inches from the stripper. If you have a reversible drill be sure it is set for forward rotation. Forward or normal rotation will, with the set-up just described, cause the line to be removed from the top of the reel to the top of the stripper, thereby eliminating line twist and kinking.

Run the drill slowly until a few turns of line have been taken on the stripper spool, apply some pressure to the reel spool with the left thumb to prevent backlash, and accelerate the drill to remove the line at a rapid rate. A little practice will show you the best speed to use. Distribute the line evenly over the stripper spool by moving the reel back and forth with the left hand. Slow the drill speed down when the reel spool can be seen and stop the drill when the end of the line is reached. The line may now be cut or untied from the reel spool. Should you want to strip another reel, simply tie the end of the line on the second reel to the end of the line already on the stripper and repeat the process.

Spinning reels can also be stripped with this tool if, prior to tying the line to the stripper, a wide, tight-fitting rubber band is placed over the line on the reel spool to put some tension on the line as it is being stripped. From this point on, the stripping procedure is the same.

There are two options for removing the old line from the stripper. The first involves locking the stripper in a vise with the dowel held horizontally and the disc slots up, and then sawing down through the disc slots and the line with a dull, fine-toothed hacksaw. By sawing all the way into the dowel slot, the line can be easily removed from the stripper. To prevent a mess and a lot of cleaning up, place a garbage can on the floor under the stripper to catch the cut pieces of line as they fall from the stripper. When this option is exercised, the stripper can be used over and over again. The second option involves filling the stripper completely with old line, removing the hardware so that it can be used again and throwing away the stripper with the unwanted line still wound on. Should you elect to use this disposal method, don't bother cutting the slots in either the discs or the dowel, as they are unnecessary.

When using this device, a few simple precautions should be observed. When stripping conventional reels, be sure sufficient lubrication is present on the reel spool bearings to prevent burnout of internal parts; disengage the drag and be sure the click is off. If a number of reels are to be stripped at the same sitting, it would be wise to tape the thumb you will apply pressure to the spool with to prevent burns. When stripping spinning reels, be sure the bail is open to the casting position and the line is being stripped directly from the reel spool before removing it. When using a stripper with the disc slots cut

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in, it would be a good idea to tape closed the open ends of the slots at the outer edge of the discs so that the line is not snagged by the open slot as you guide line close to the disc at high speed. Always work carefully the first few times you use it so that you can get the feel of the operation before proceeding on to really high drill speeds.

This simple, inexpensive line stripper, made in about thirty minutes with power tools, can be used with all types of reels and line. It has proven to be a real time saver for me and should prove to be a time saver for any other fisherman who must remove old lines from a number of reels.



OVERHEAD SPINNER BODY

Recording Fish Finders

by Al Nunes-Vais

There is no question that a properly used recording fish finder can increase your angling capability and catch. There are now a number of good devices of this type on the market at prices around \$400, and for the capability that they can add, they can prove to be a worthwhile investment. But the key to one of those devices is to be able to take best advantage of the information that they provide.

In that line of thought, a couple of years ago, the State Legislature in Minnesota attempted to pass a bill to outlaw these fish finders. Outraged anglers and industry fought back on the basis that "machines don't catch fish, but people catch fish..." and they won. If you stop to think about it, it's really true—a good combination of man/machine interface can be a winner. Conversely, a good machine and a poor interpreter of the data presented will most likely not increase the fish catch that comes aboard.

Sure, having a recording fish finder aboard can cause us tremendous frustrations. I don't know what is worse: seeing an empty ocean and catching nothing, or seeing solid concentrations of fish and also catching nothing. In either case, without the recorder aboard, we might remain dumb and happy and chalk it off to another bad day. But on balance, that little gadget will tell you if fish prevail and you can then play with the techniques until you get a strike or two.

The major advantage that a record-

ing unit offers over the less-expensive flashing units is the permanently-etched display of information relative to fish presence and location, as well as bottom topography. Let's take a channel crossing situation, for instance. On a flashing or digital unit, you might see readings that say 30,30,30 ...40...50...60...70...80...70...60...50...40...30,30,30, but you must attempt to visualize what it really looks like. The recorder will draw you a nice picture of what the cross-section of that channel looks like. For that reason, when talking about recorders and flashers, I like to point to the analogy of watching a football game on television, compared to listening to it on the radio. You will get the final score and information from both, but think about what the TV picture does for you. The recorder, of course, gives you the underwater picture in the form of a trace etched out by a stylus.

Let's take a look at some typical traces, and see what they tell us, and how they might help us improve our fish catch.

1. (refer to number below the traces.) You are out on the Cholera Bank, on a relatively flat bottom looking for codfish and suddenly your machine spits out an image such as you see here—a pod of fish a few feet off the bottom. The object of the game then becomes to judge wind, current, and anchor scope, so that when you throw the hook overboard, the boat will come to rest above your quarry. Your recorder will tell you if you have been successful or if you have to try again. In such situations, it is helpful to throw a floating object overboard to mark the spot that you need to drop back to. Many anglers carry a plastic bottle, wrapped with line attached to a weight which drops to the bottom as the line unwinds. This is better than throwing an untethered float overboard, which then becomes influenced by wind and current.

2. Good fishing is generally found around wrecks—shown here is the Ramos. Actually we are looking at several passes over this wreck, which appears fishless at the moment. It is interesting to note the V-bottom configuration, directly beneath the wreck, which has been caused by the current eroding the bottom away from the hull. How does your recorder help you in this situation? First, you must be able to put yourself into the general wreck vicinity by either using ranges—perhaps Loran, but once you

have arrived near the wreck, the recorder will help you find it, then tell you if you have anchored properly. By the same token, if you are trolling, the recorder will tell you that you are passing above the wreck—or allow you to compensate boat course, so that by the time your lines—175 feet back—arrive on the scene, they will pass close to pay dirt. Perhaps you have been frustrated on the fishing grounds, watching the same boat bailing bass, pass after pass, over some small corner of ocean, while boats thirty to forty feet to port and starboard are striking out. Chances are that our fish-catching friend has isolated an unusual bottom topographic feature which is holding fish, and is using his recorder to best advantage to keep getting back to the same place.

3. This is a classical recording of fish sitting under bait. In this case, the blips directly on the bottom are mixed stripers and blues, and the rather solid dark lines above are sand eels. How do we know that the bait is sand eels? Sorry, can't say: the recorder told us, but they were in there so solid that several were foul hooked. The information that we gather here is that the fish we are seeking are on bottom, in about twenty feet of water, and that we must get our lines there by combination of wire line and/or weights.

4. This is another rather classical representation. We all know that fish are prevalent at the edges of dropoffs, channels or banks, and here we see the most solid concentration at the edge of a channel dropoff. What do we do about it? First, get your lines to the right depth, then use your recorder to keep you trolling along the edge of the channel, rather than going back and forth across it. This will maximize the time that your lures are moving through productive areas.

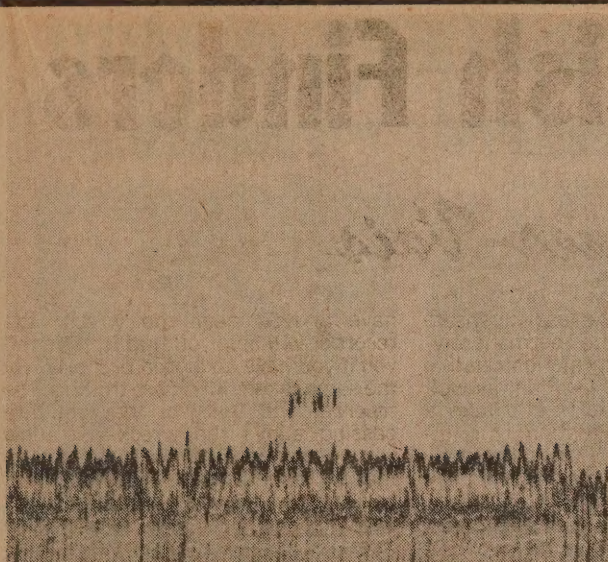
5. This trace was made on the rocky and jagged bottom at Shrewsbury Rocks. There are fish concentrations deep, but off bottom. The lesson that you will quickly learn here is that if you are trolling in the direction of the trace, that you best get your lines in before you reach the high rocky point at A, otherwise the chances are that you will say bye-bye to some expensive lures. After some experience, you can determine how long you can leave the lines deep after you pass over the bottom depression at point B.

Incidentally, you may note that the figure 5 is somewhat different from

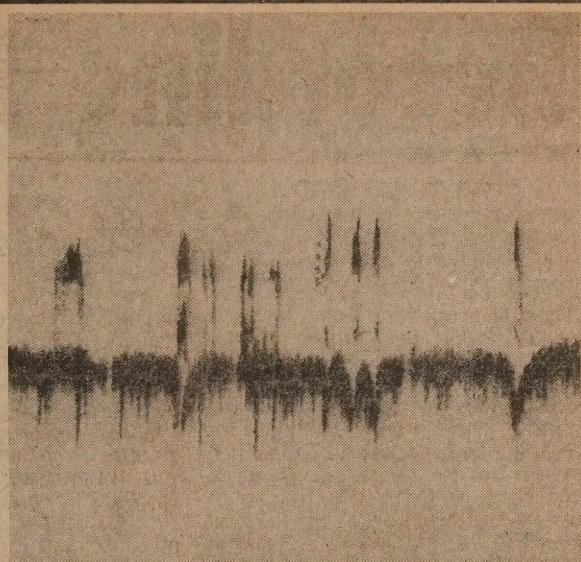
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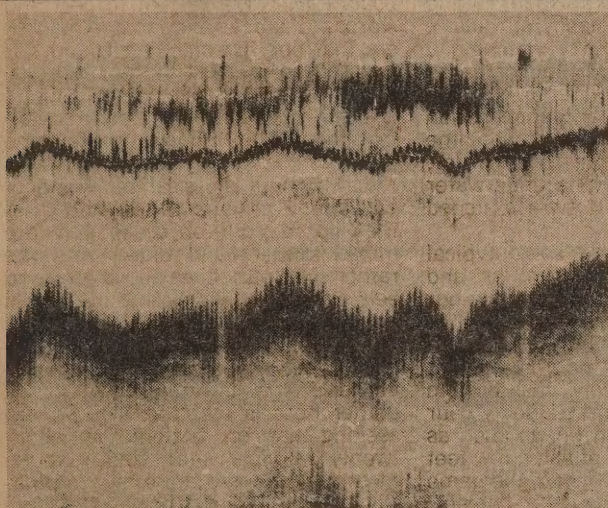
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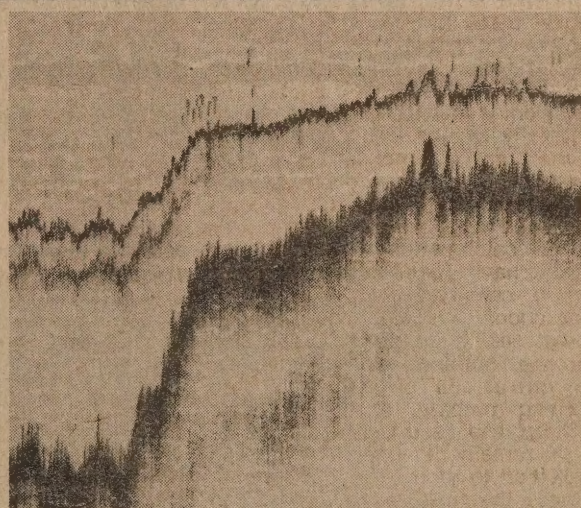
Trace number one.



Trace Number two.



Trace Number three.

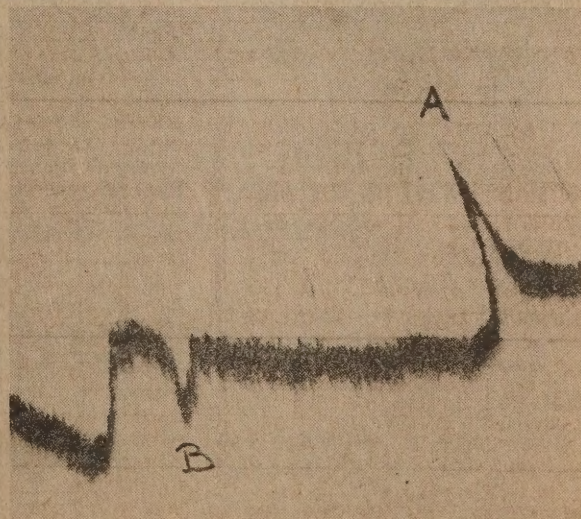


Trace Number four.

the four previous ones. This last recording presents the data in curvilinear fashion, rather than straight line, as in the first four traces.

These are just a few situations illustrated with actual traces, where having a recording fish-finder can help you, and there are many others. Visualize yourself for a moment, trolling slowly along with your lines near bottom, 175 feet back and suddenly, your magic box shows you a bunch of fish at fifteen feet. If you are watching your recorder closely and have a crew aboard, you will have time to rapidly wind in fifty feet of line and raise them to the fifteen foot level where the fish are. Conversely, if the fish are deeper than your lines, you would then drop back rather than wind in. Another good combination is the downrigger/recorder combination. When trolling slowly, it is sometimes possible to actually see the downrigger weight on the trace, so that you will know the exact position of your trolled lines relative to fish markings that you may get.

In summary then, there is no question that a recording fish-finder is a valuable asset to have aboard. You will need to get some experience in its use, interpretation of data presented, and what to do about it. As this falls into place, your fish catch is bound to increase.



Trace Number five.

THE 1978 FISHING FLEET IS IN!!!

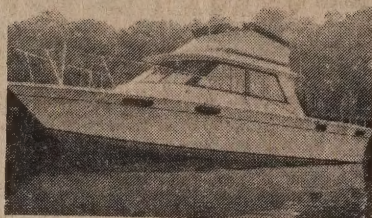
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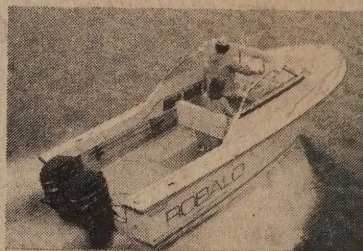
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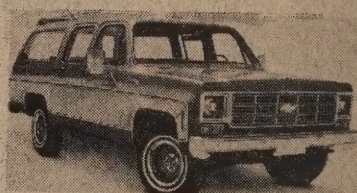
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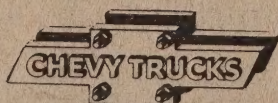
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ROD BUILDING

Part Two—GRIPS & BUTTS

by Dr. William A. Muller

Once you have selected your rod blank and determined the purpose for which it will be used, you will have to gather necessary grips and hardware to complete the job.

GRIPS:

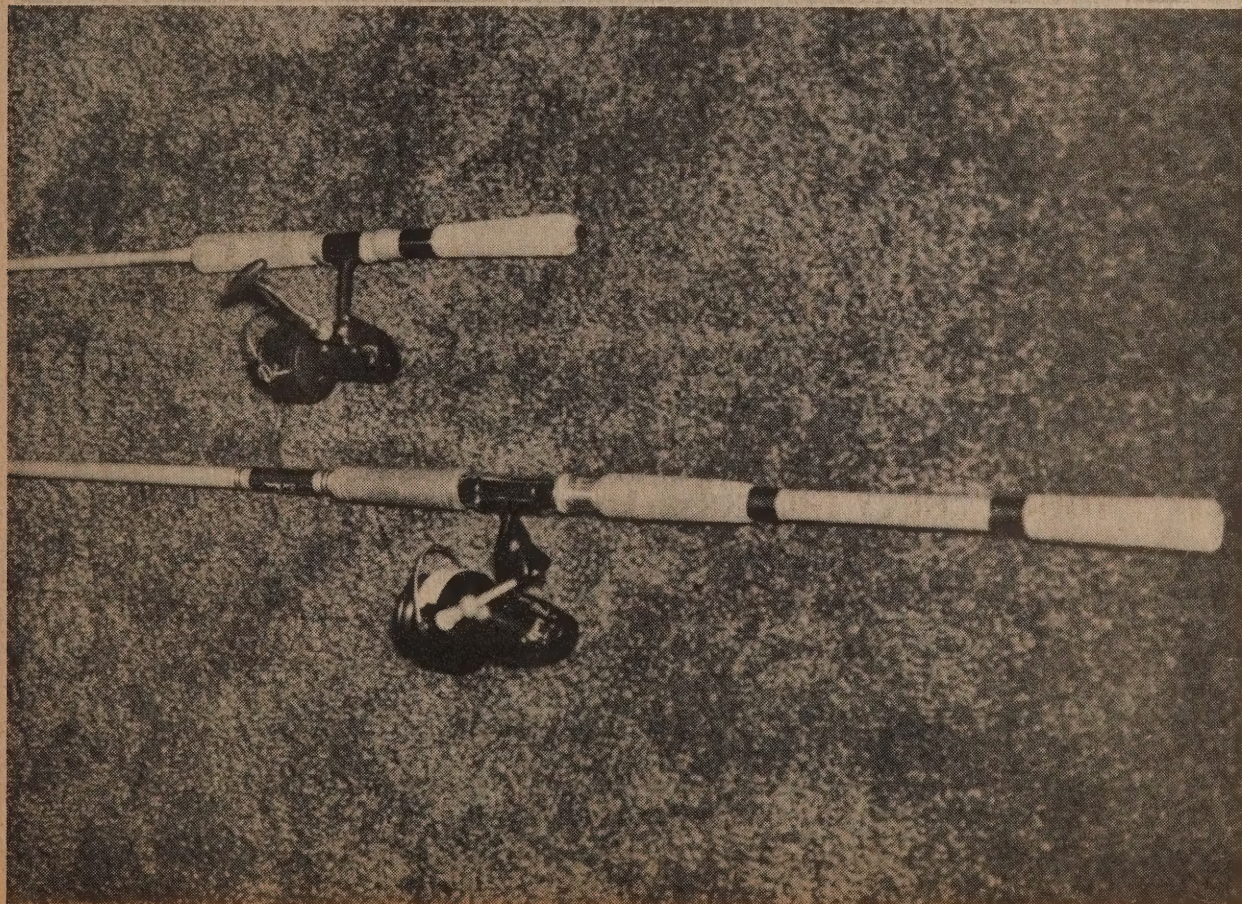
The fisherman can select from a variety of materials for the grip. The time was when only cork was used, but today neoprene, cork tape, and composition materials are available. Natural or "specie" cork is still preferred by many fishermen because it is easy to work with and is light in weight. Cork rings can be purchased and the angler can then fashion them to fit the blank one by one. However, it is also possible to buy pre-formed specie cork grips, which eliminate the need for a lot of filing and sanding. Cork rings and grips come in several sizes. Smaller diameter sizes are best

for children and those with small hands, while larger sizes are best for adults. The most popular size is one-half inch.

The blank should be roughed up, either with a rasp or coarse sandpaper, before the rings are glued in place. The holes in the rings must be filed out with a round file so that they fit snugly on the blank. Remember that the diameter of the blank will decrease from the butt towards the tip, so that the hole of each ring cannot be bored out to the same diameter. When all the rings for a given grip have been fitted, spread Duco Cement on the rod blank. Enough glue should be used so that there is a slight excess, but not so much that it drips off the blank as the rings or pre-formed grips are positioned. The rings should be held

tightly together while drying. A good method employs the use of two rubber bands. Stretch one over the last ring and pull it so that it fits over the first ring. Repeat this on both sides. The rubber bands should apply gentle pressure, but they should not cut grooves into the cork. When the glued rings have dried (about twenty-four hours for thorough curing) they can be fashioned into a smooth surface with a rasp and sandpaper. The final stages of finishing should be performed with fine grain sandpaper to achieve an even finish and to avoid gouging the surface.

Neoprene grips are tough and durable. Gluing the neoprene to the blank requires no exterior shaping. With the exception of excessive abuse, neoprene grips will last the life



of the rod. However, they are heavier than cork. The neoprene grips can be purchased in sizes that approximate the diameter of the rod blank at the location where they will be attached. The grip holes should be slightly smaller than the diameter of the blank in order to afford a snug fit. If because of the unique taper of the blank, preference of the angler, or availability of grip sizes, a close fit cannot be achieved, purchase a smaller size and the grip hole can be widened with the use of a round file. Remember that if you remove too much material while filing, you cannot put it back. Thus, file away a little at a time and then test the fit. When the fit is close but still a little too small, boil the grips for several minutes in plain water. This will cause them to expand and to soften. Rough-up the blank to its desired position using a rag. Wash the grip and rod blank with cold water. This will cool off and shrink the grip to a snug fit and wash away excess glue on the exposed blank.

There is a relatively new grip material available and it is catching on fast. Latex rubber foam, called Hypalon, is flexible, attractive, easy to work with, and warm for cold weather fishing. These grips can be

secured easily with glue.

When the fisherman uses cork rings or pre-formed cork grips, the exterior surfaces will have to be fashioned to a shape that is desired. The neoprene grips, however, are tapered. Thus, for the butt grip, the angler should slide the fat end down the blank first; while for the grip below the reel seat, the neoprene should go on tapered side first, and above the reel seat the fat end should go on first. This is not to suggest that the rod will not work if the fisherman uses the opposite fashion, but it seems that the traditional grip positioning is found to be the most convenient by most anglers.

It is very important to be patient when securing the grips. Fitting should be done slowly so that the finished product will not slip out of position when the sun and salt have had a chance to work on the rod. The stress that is created when a good fish runs can crack the glue that holds the grip in place. These fighting stresses, combined with the drying effects of the elements, can destroy the bond of grip to blank. However, a proper fit with the correct amount of glue will hold securely.

Do not force grips onto the blank

with excessive pressure. Both specie cork and neoprene tend to crack when the fit is too tight.

Although I have had very good success with Duco Cement (DuPont) used with specie cork and Elmer's Glue-All for neoprene, other waterproof glues that work well are: Seal-All, Ambroid, Pliobond, Wellbond, and Resorcinol Glue (U.S. Plywood).

Cork tape is perhaps the easiest grip material to work with, but it rates low in durability unless the craftsman takes extra pains to be very careful. Cork tape is a cork-like material with an adhesive backing. The blank should be scored with coarse sandpaper, but the blank must be cleaned thoroughly. Dust on the blank will prevent a proper bond between tape and blank.

Cut the end of the tape at a sharp angle. Remove the backing on the adhesive several feet at a time. Wind the tape around the blank so that it spirals either up or down the blank. Pull the tape while you wrap with it and be sure that the sides of the tape fit snugly against each other as you wind. When the job is done, trim the ends with a razor blade so that the finished product has even edges.

In order to help ensure that the edges will not come loose, they should be wrapped tightly with either plastic electrician's tape or nylon rod windings.

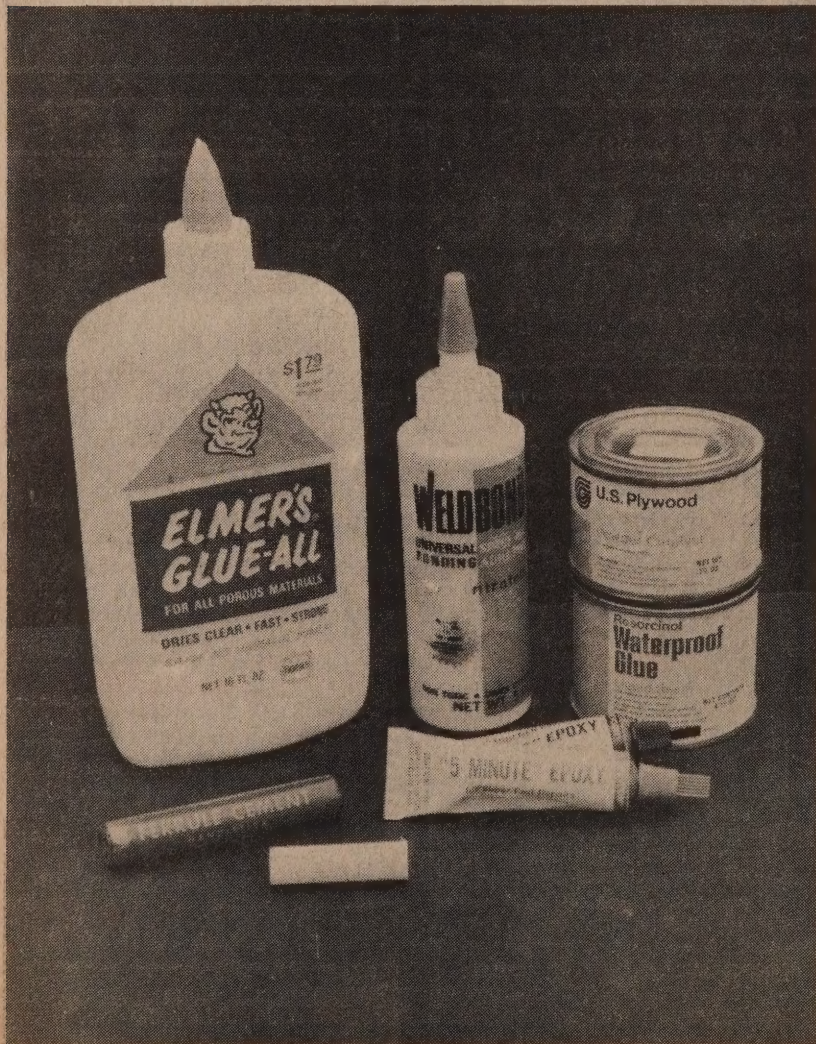
BUTTS:

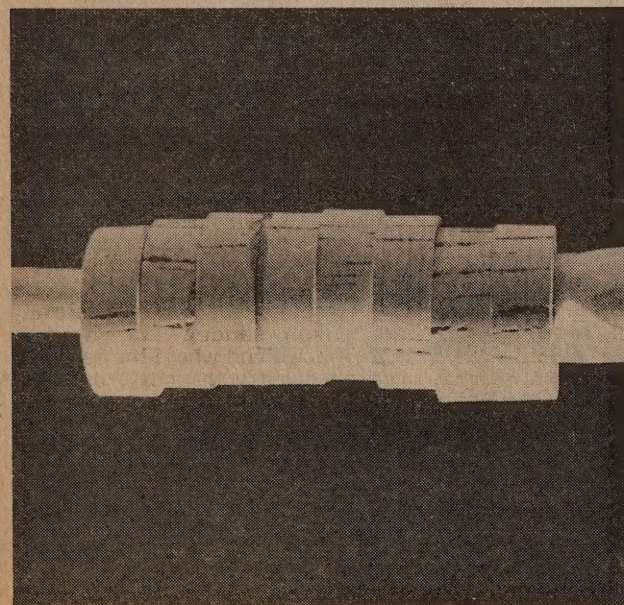
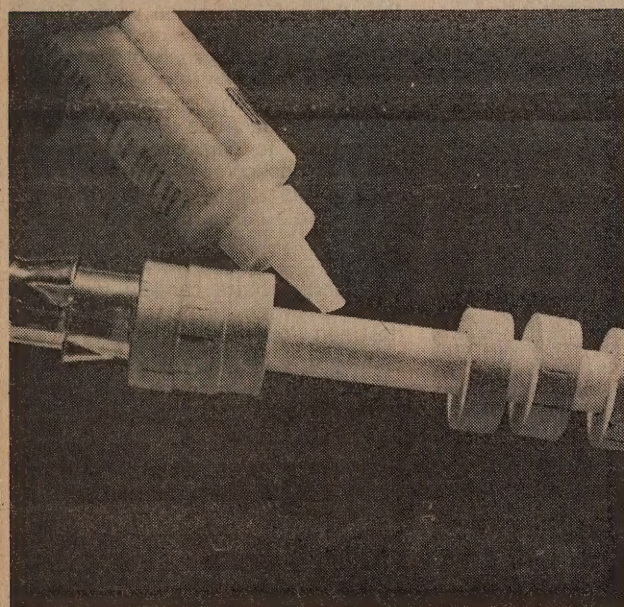
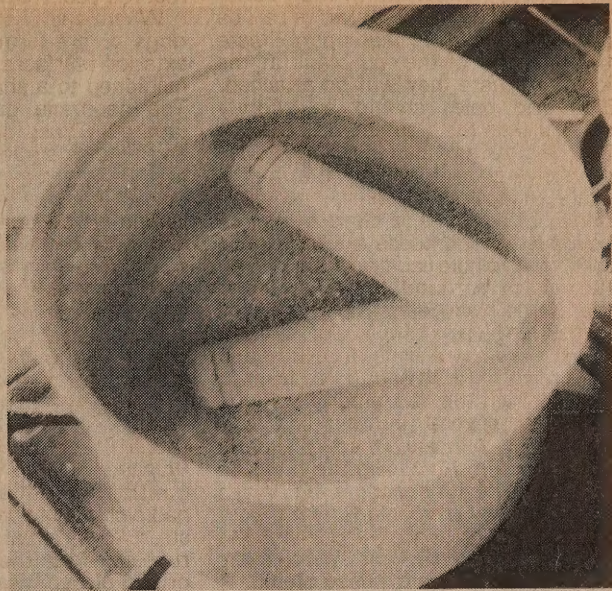
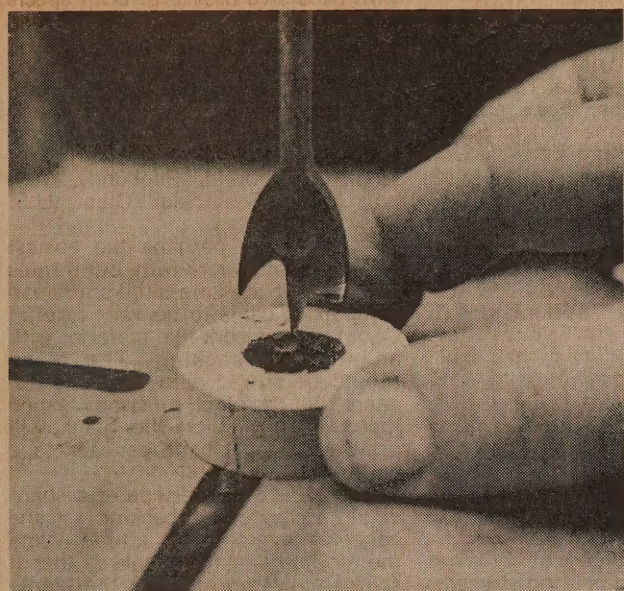
Although butts can be fashioned from grips on boat rods that are destined for most inshore service, some anglers like the appearance and feel of a wood butt. Remember that the wood butt will add considerable weight to the finished product and if you like to use a light rod you may opt to compromise appearance for convenience. Pre-shaped wood butts (usually made of hickory or mahogany) are available from tackle and sporting goods stores. All of the materials for rod building can also be ordered from a number of mail order houses such as Midland Tackle, Sloatsburg, New York, and Reed Tackle, Caldwell, N.J.

Few anglers wish to go through the trouble of turning down their own butts on a lathe, but if the craftsman is skilled and has this tool at his or her disposal, it certainly affords an extra opportunity for the personal touch. Wood butts will have to be stained and then finished with either marine varnish or several layers of polyurethane material.

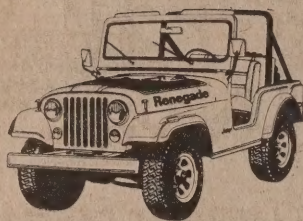
Wood butts produced commercially are rough sanded and have a turned-down end where the reel seat can be glued with epoxy, and if a length of cotton thread is pulled over the end of the wood before the reel seat is pushed over it, a tight fit will result.

Butts for bait casting rods are commercially available in either plastic or metal. It is not practical for the craftsman to attempt to make his or her own butt for bait casting.





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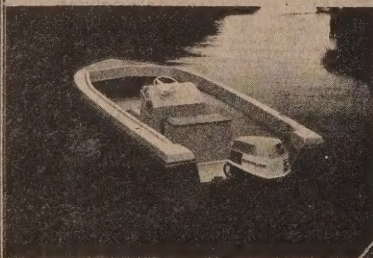
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SOUTH SHORE Fishing Report

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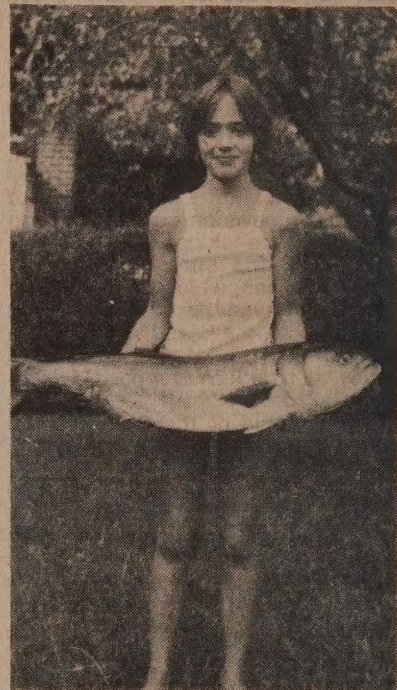
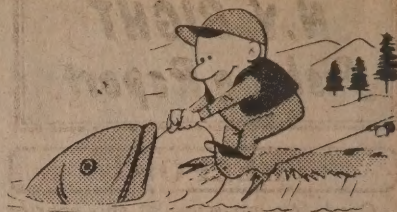
Capt. Dick Vigilant of the charter boat **Triton II** reported that the fishing is still good off of Shark's Ledge for the open boats. The cod are averaging 5 to 15 lbs., with a few nice pollack thrown in as a bonus. The fish are chasing baitfish and are being taken on both bait and the Diamond jig and tube rigs. Dick said that he still has a few choice dates open for small or large groups that want to get in on this winter fishing.

CAPTREE

The open boat **Capt. Scotty** reports that the codfishing ranges from poor to fair to good, depending on the day and conditions. The best day this week saw 20 cod come over the rail with a sprinkling of dogfish. The cod are being taken mainly on open bottom. The species filling out anglers' bags is the spectacular catches of whiting and ling, mainly whiting. Capt. Tweety has been corralling whiting both close in and offshore also, to the tune of 70 to 150 fish per man. The whiting are running mostly 2 to 3 lbs., and fares are taking off sacks of them. Now's the time to cash in on this hot fishing and stock up on fillets.

Capt. Eddie Brincat of the new charterboat **Capt. Eddie B II** called to tell us that his new boat was in and he is now booking charters for '78. The boat was previously the **Pilot II** out of Sheepshead Bay and she's much longer and beamier than Eddie's

previous boat. Keep watching the Captree ads for details on this latest charterboat to move into Captree.



Shown here is Kim Marie Giudice of Amityville with one of the seventeen bluefish averaging 13 lbs., taken on a night trip at Cartwright aboard the "Viking Starship."

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January 18-22, 1978

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N.Y. BIGHT Fishing Report

FREEPORT

Capt. Wayne King of the charter boat **Captain Joe** is the second proud papa this week to inform us that he has just had an addition to his family, a nine-pound baby boy. For the benefit of the womens' libbers who may be reading this issue, it must be conceded that Mrs. King was also involved in this catch. Wayne was on his way to the hospital, but he called us just prior to leaving. He also sprang the news on us this morning that he will be taking delivery on his new boat this spring, a 50-foot Sportfisherman, which will be named the **King Wayne**. As the Captain Joe is doing now, the King Wayne will be sailing from the Freeport Boatmen's Association dock on Freeport's Wood-cleft Canal.

Capt. Richie of the **Starstream II** reports that on Friday, the boat fished southeast of the inlet and caught three cod and an average of 25 to 30 whiting. Over the weekend, the weather was rough, but for those who stuck to the rails up to 40 whiting to 3 lbs., were taken per person. A few cod were added to the day's catch.

Capt. Sy on the **Bluefin II** called to say that on Saturday he had the Amity Harbor Fishing Club out and fishing west of the NB buoy, Tom Mulligan took the pool with a 20 lb. cod with runner-up fish being an 18 lb. cod hung by Charlie Krumnacker of Oceanside. This was on open bottom in the high winds and heavy seas of Saturday. A sprinkling of whiting was picked away at as well. The cod were full of sand eels and herring. Sy asked us to tell you to call early for choice '78 dates.

The **Capt. Al** has been picking away at cod all week long, but the main bulk of the catches have been whiting which he is taking close in around the whistler buoy. On Friday, passengers had very good catches of blackfish up to 8 lbs., fishing on the rocks at Cholera. Six cod all under 15 lbs. were also taken at Cholera. Al has asked us to announce that every Friday and Saturday night at 7:30 p.m., he will be sailing for night whiting. This will give all of you "moonlighters" a chance to load up on those delicious whiting filets. The fish are being caught in excellent quantities and they are a good size. Al asked us to tell you to please take note that he is sailing all winter long and offers convenient free dockside parking.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

The **Dorothy B** reports good whiting fishing was had up until the weekend. On Friday, he fished Ambrose and loaded up with whiting averaging 1 1/2



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lbs., and running up to 3 lbs. On Saturday, the storm moved in and only a half a day could be spent on the water.

The **New Eagle** reports that good whiting fishing was found southeast of Ambrose during the week. The whiting ran up to 3 lbs. and a few ling were mixed in. Night fishermen also did well during the week. The fishing slowed over the weekend because of bad weather.

The **Blue Sea III** reported excellent whiting fishing on Friday, southeast of the Ambrose Tower. Catches of up to a bag of 1 1/2 to 3 lb. fish were taken. Very few whiting were mixed in.

The staff of L.I.F. extends heartiest congratulations to Capt. and Mrs. Fred Ardolino on the birth of their first son, a nine-pound, bouncing baby boy. Congratulations, Fred, on landing this nine pounder, but when all is said and done, you did have help.

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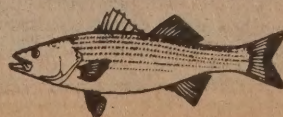
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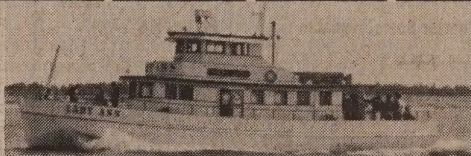
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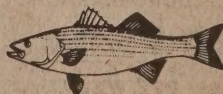
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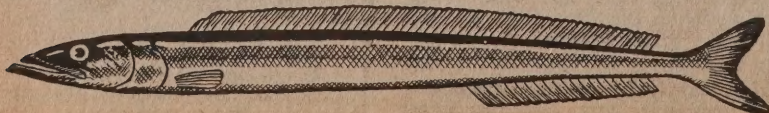
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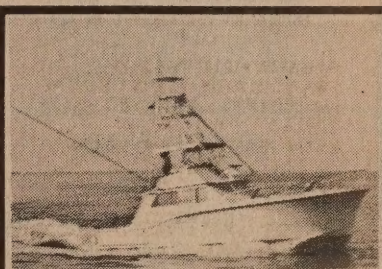
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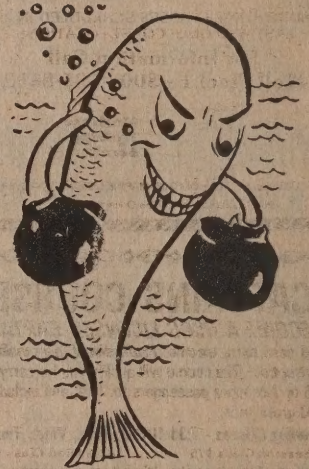
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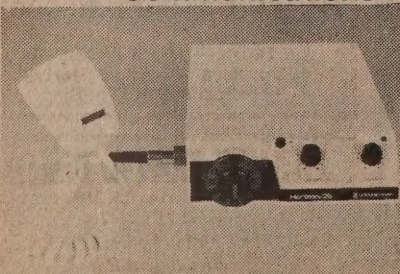
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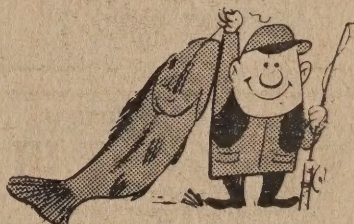
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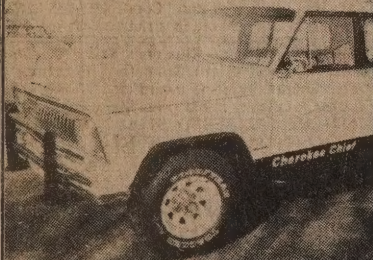
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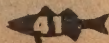
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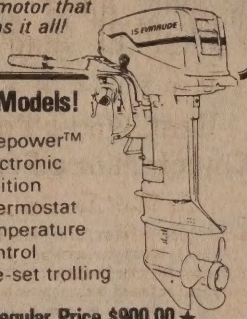
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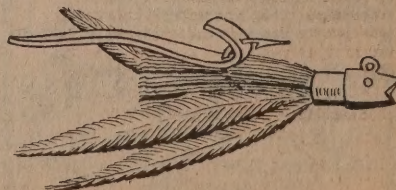
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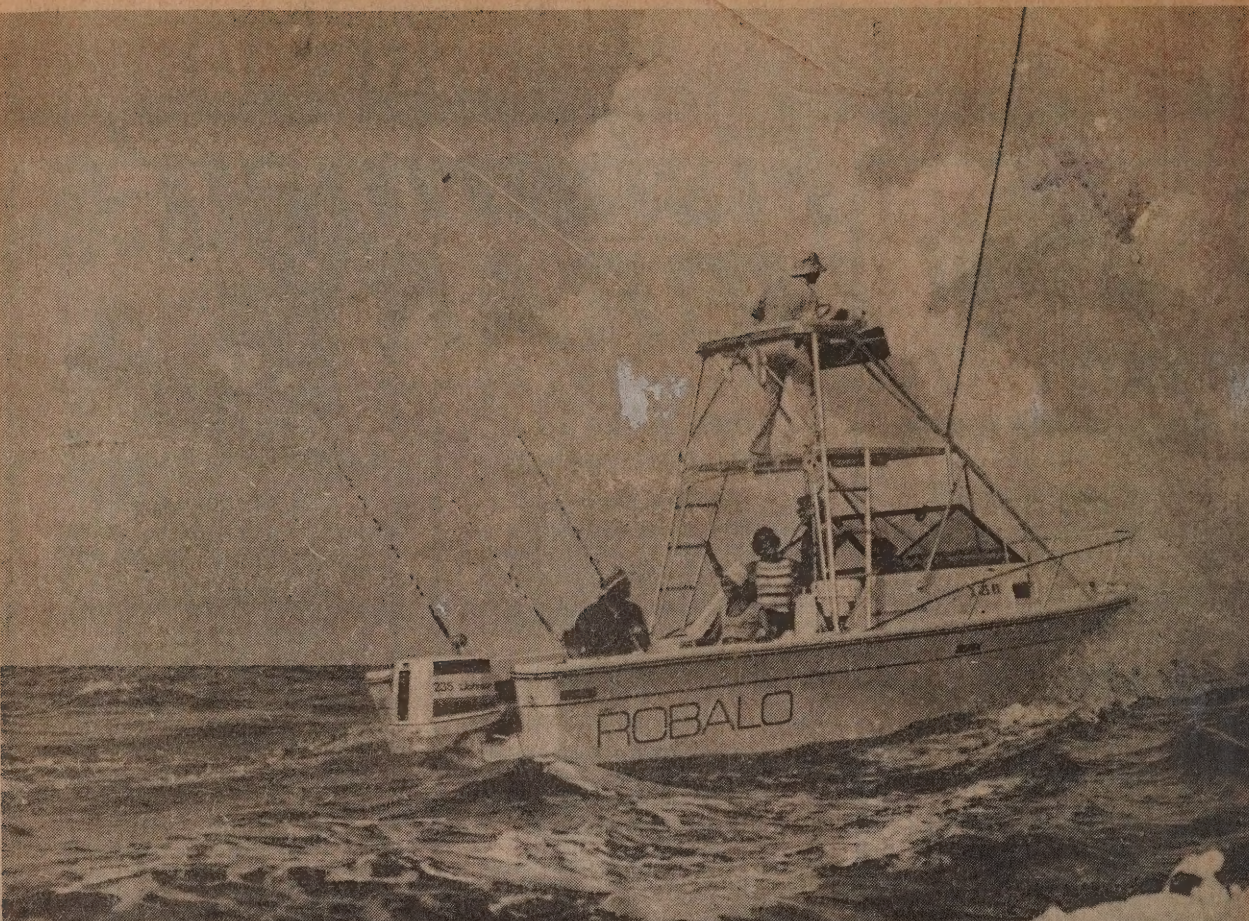
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